



SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS AND
MANAGEMENT

Brand Archeology

Identifying Pivotal Moments Shaping the Brand Today

by

Herman Mikael Vähäkangas

Kevin Martin Cory Blomkvist

June 2023

Master's Programme in International Marketing & Brand
Management

Supervisor: Mats Urde
Examiner: Veronika Tarnovskaya

Abstract

Title:	Brand Archaeology. Identifying Pivotal Moments Shaping the Brand Today.
Date of Submission:	2023-05-31
Course:	BUSN39 Degree project in Global Marketing
Authors:	Herman Vähäkangas & Kevin Blomkvist
Supervisor:	Mats Urde
Key words:	Brand archaeology, pivotal moments, brand identity, corporate branding, excavation, artifacts.
Purpose:	The purpose of this study is to discover pivotal moments influencing brand identity through the concept deemed as brand archeology.
Methodology:	A qualitative multiple case study with a constructionist and inductive approach was executed in this research. Interviews with former directors and managers at Absolut, Ericsson and Lemminkäinen was conducted.
Theoretical Perspectives:	In creating and developing the Brand Archaeology Framework, the fields of archaeology, corporate brand identity and storytelling acted as the foundation.
Empirical Data:	The empirical data consists of interviews with the aforementioned directors and managers, and document extracted from company websites.
Conclusion:	The Brand Archaeology Framework is utilized in order to identify pivotal moments within a brands past. The pivotal moments can in turn be used to provide valuable insights which can affect and assist in future decision-making.
Word count:	35982 words.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we would like to express our gratitude to our thesis supervisor, Mats Urde, for his constant advice, insightful input, and steadfast support during this research journey. His knowledge and guidance have been invaluable in guiding the course of our research.

We are really grateful to the research participants who freely offered their time and opinions. Their willingness to participate in interviews and share useful insights has tremendously expanded the study's findings.

Lund, 31st May 2023

Kevin Blomkvist

Herman Vähäkangas

Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	BACKGROUND AND PROBLEMATIZATION	1
1.2	RESEARCH PURPOSE.....	3
1.3	RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS.....	3
1.4	OUTLINE OF THE THESIS.....	4
2	METHODOLOGY.....	6
2.1	RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY	6
2.2	RESEARCH STRATEGY	8
2.2.1	<i>Qualitative Research Strategy</i>	8
2.2.2	<i>Inductive Approach</i>	9
2.3	RESEARCH DESIGN.....	10
2.4	SAMPLING	11
2.4.1	<i>Sampling of Cases</i>	11
2.4.2	<i>Sampling of Respondents</i>	12
2.5	DATA COLLECTION	12
2.5.1	<i>Interviews as Primary Data Source</i>	12
2.5.2	<i>Documents as Secondary Data Source</i>	14
2.6	DATA ANALYSIS	14
2.6.1	<i>Structure of Empirical Results</i>	14
2.6.2	<i>Analyzing Qualitative Data</i>	15
2.6.3	<i>Metaphors in Data Analysis</i>	16
2.7	VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	17
2.7.1	<i>The Qualitative Adaptation of Validity and Reliability</i>	17
2.7.2	<i>The Alternative Criteria – Trustworthiness and Authenticity</i>	18
2.7.3	<i>Source Criticism</i>	20
2.7.4	<i>Research Ethics</i>	21
2.7.5	<i>Reflexivity</i>	22
2.7.6	<i>Politics and Access</i>	23
3	LITERATURE REVIEW.....	24
3.1	ARCHEOLOGY	24
3.1.1	<i>Brand Archeology</i>	26
3.2	CORPORATE BRAND IDENTITY	27
3.2.1	<i>Difference Between Product Brand and Corporate Brand</i>	28
3.2.2	<i>Corporate Brand Identity Matrix</i>	29
3.3	STORYTELLING.....	35
3.3.1	<i>Storytelling in Modern Context</i>	36
3.3.2	<i>The Four Elements of Storytelling</i>	37
3.3.3	<i>Storytelling in Business</i>	39

4	EMPIRICAL RESULTS	41
4.1	COMPANY PROFILES.....	41
4.1.1	<i>Absolut</i>	41
4.1.2	<i>Ericsson</i>	50
4.1.3	<i>Lemminkäinen</i>	58
5	ANALYSIS.....	66
5.1	CASE BY CASE ANALYSIS.....	66
5.1.1	<i>Absolut</i>	66
5.1.2	<i>Ericsson</i>	71
5.1.3	<i>Lemminkäinen</i>	74
5.2	CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS	77
5.2.1	<i>Differences</i>	77
5.2.2	<i>Similarities</i>	78
5.3	THE BRAND ARCHOLOGY FRAMEWORK.....	79
6	DISCUSSION	83
7	CONCLUSION.....	86
7.1	THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.....	87
7.1.1	<i>Creation and Introduction to The Brand Archaeology Framework.</i>	87
7.1.2	<i>Definition and Exploration of Pivotal Moments</i>	88
7.1.3	<i>Method Cross-Fertilization</i>	89
7.2	MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS	89
7.3	LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH.....	92
	REFERENCES.....	94
	APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW GUIDE	100

List of Tables

Table 1: Trustworthiness' four criteria	19
Table 2: Corporate Brand Identity Matrix - Absolut.....	42
Table 3: Pivotal moments - Absolut.....	50
Table 4: Pivotal moments - Ericsson.....	58
Table 5: Pivotal moments - Lemminkäinen	65

List of Figures

Figure 1: The four rings model (Easterby-Smith et al. 2015)	7
Figure 2: Orientation egg (Urde, 2021).....	30
Figure 3: The Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Urde, 2013)	34
Figure 4: The Four Paths (Urde, 2021)	35
Figure 5: Absolut Vodka - Logo (Absolut, n.d.t).....	43
Figure 6: Ericsson - Logo (Ericsson a, n.d.).....	52
Figure 7: Asfaltti Osakeyhtiö Lemminkäinen - Logo	59
Figure 8: Absolut – Timeline	66
Figure 9: Ericsson – Timeline	71
Figure 10: Lemminkäinen – Timeline.....	74
Figure 11: The Brand Archeology Framework - "Overview"	80
Figure 12: The Brand Archeology Framework.....	81

1 Introduction

This very first chapter of the thesis introduces the three main research areas that build the foundation of the research, namely archeology, corporate brand identity, and storytelling. Relevant key studies are briefly highlighted to contextualize the research. Subsequently, the research's positioning is presented, leading to the defined purpose of the study. This is followed by the presentation of research questions, objectives, and limitations. The potential theoretical contributions and managerial implications of the research are also discussed. Finally, the chapter concludes by providing a structural outline of the thesis.

1.1 Background and Problematization

Creating a strong corporate brand identity has developed into a crucial component of marketing strategies in modern society as businesses look to set themselves apart from rivals and forge close ties with customers (Balmer, 2012; Kapferer, 2012). In essence, corporate brand identity consists of various components that touch on the brand core's internal and exterior elements that set a firm apart from its rivals (Urde, 2013; Urde, 2021). Moreover, the brand's core determines and steers the development of the identity process, i.e., managing all aspects to fit in and reflect the "basic idea" that the core represents (Urde, 2013; Urde, 2021). However, developing a corporate brand identity is more complicated than it first appears. According to Kapferer (2012), to develop a robust corporate brand identity, one needs a thorough understanding of the company's history, culture, and principles. Furthermore, Wheeler, A. (2013, p. 102) argues that the "identity process demands a combination of investigation, strategic thinking, design excellence, and project management skills". Therefore, this paper focuses on utilizing the revitalized concept deemed as brand archeology together with storytelling and brand identity theories.

The debate over nurture versus nature is one of the primary challenges in building a corporate brand identity. Cross (1990) states that outside variables, including consumer perception, market trends, and competition, exclusively influence a company's brand identity. On the other hand, others assert that a company's brand identity is based on its history, culture, and values, which are influenced by internal variables such as organizational structure, employee values, and leadership (Cross, 1990).

Take Coca-Cola, for instance, with its distinctive brand character. Since Coca-Cola has operated for over a century, its brand identity has changed. The original Coca-Cola logo and slogan served to represent the company's brand identity, which was built on the notion of

being a revitalizing and refreshing beverage at the time. However, as time has passed and the society has evolved, so has Coca-Cola. The company's corporate identity has changed throughout time to place more of an emphasis on sustainability and social responsibility. The company's internal beliefs and culture, which place high importance on environmental sustainability and community involvement, are reflected in this change in corporate identity.

On the other hand, brand storytelling is extremely important in creating a corporate brand identity. It entails developing a narrative that connects with customers and conveys the mission and values of the business (Fog et al., 2010). Moreover, a thorough understanding of the company's history and culture is necessary to develop a compelling brand story. This is the moment when brand archeology comes to life. Discovering the company's background, looking at its achievements and setbacks, and figuring out the guiding principles that have built its identity are all part of brand archeology. Thus, understanding the past to develop the future - is one of brand archeology's guiding principles.

Apple is one company whose brand identity is strongly influenced by its history and culture. Steve Jobs, the company's creator, was recognized for his love of innovation, simplicity, and design. Apple's brand identity, which stresses user-friendly interfaces, cutting-edge technology, and minimalist design, reflects these ideals. The company's brand story highlights its history of innovation and dedication to democratizing technology.

We argue that brand archeology is a missing element in brand identity creation. Moreover, the thesis aims to show that businesses need to pay more attention to the value of brand archeology and not solely base their brand identity creation on market analysis and customer trends found today. This latter strategy frequently produces a generic and weak brand identity that fails to connect with customers. Businesses lose the chance to develop a strong and genuine brand identity that accurately reflects their values and mission by ignoring the internal variables that determine a company's identity. Therefore, a revitalization of the concept deemed as brand archeology is needed.

A comprehensive strategy that considers both internal and external variables is necessary to develop a strong business brand identity (Kapferer, 2012; Urde, 2013). Companies can establish a genuine brand identity that resonates with consumers and distinguishes them from rivals by fusing brand storytelling with brand archeology. Examples like Apple and Coca-Cola show how crucial it is to take into account a company's internal history, culture, and beliefs when creating a strong brand identity.

This thesis aims to utilize the concept of brand archeology to backtrack the brand's history and arrive at pivotal moments that later determined the company's success or failure - more precisely, we try to explore the elements leading up to this pivotal moment – changing the course of the brand.

1.2 Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to discover pivotal moments influencing brand identity through the concept deemed as brand archeology.

In order to understand what they are, how they are constructed, and why in the context of strategic brand management, they are essential - three research questions are formulated:

RQ1: How do pivotal moments in a brand's history shape its identity and influence its future?

RQ2: Why is understanding the pivotal moments in a brand's history and their influence on its identity essential for effective strategic brand management?

RQ3: What is the role of brand archeology in the strategic management of a brand, and how can it be leveraged to enhance a brand's identity?

The aim is to develop a novel theory at the intersection of the three research fields of archeology, corporate brand identity, and storytelling from a corporate perspective. We propose a framework through which the phenomenon of pivotal moments and their influence is explained by utilizing the concept of brand archeology. Although the pivotal moments will be the main focus, the communication of other aspects of brand identity is also of interest.

1.3 Research Limitations and Contributions

It is essential to recognize that the intersection of archeology and brand management is crucial in the larger context of this thesis, which explores alternative tools and approaches to strengthen a brand's identity through the concept of brand archeology, specifically reviving this concept from the 1980s and bringing it into the 21st century. In this scenario, it is impossible to separate these two fields. Furthermore, this study delimits the product side of branding and concentrates solely on internal characteristics of corporate identity. With a corporate, management, and strategic perspective, it is addressed to managers.

The domains of archeology, corporate brand identity, and storytelling must be further elaborated upon to accomplish this study's goals and respond to the research questions. The objective is to advance these three fields of study both theoretically and practically. From a managerial perspective, the study aims to provide insights into how brand archeology may be used to explain the brand's identity and motivate brand managers to improve employees'

understanding of the brand. No previous attempt has been made to create a framework that unifies the three aforementioned research domains, but that is what the proposed theoretical contribution entails.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

The study is divided into seven main chapters, and the outline of the thesis follows the above-mentioned research purpose and questions in order to develop a new framework to find pivotal moments influencing brand identity through the concept of brand archeology. Furthermore, the concepts of storytelling and strategic brand management are implemented from a corporate perspective.

- Chapter 1:** functions as the introductory section of the research, offering background information on the topic and outlining the purpose of the study. It also presents problem formulations, presents the research questions, and further emphasizes the practical and theoretical significance of the research.
- Chapter 2:** discusses the methodological choices and considerations, further developing the tailed research philosophy, strategy, design, data gathering, and limitations.
- Chapter 3:** presents the literature review and functions as the main theoretical chapter of the study, covering archeology, corporate brand identity, and storytelling from a corporate perspective.
- Chapter 4:** introduces the chosen case brands, The Absolut Company, Lemminkäinen Oyj, and Ericsson (later Sony Ericsson), together with the empirical findings, primarily based on document studies, interviews, and observations.
- Chapter 5:** analyzes the main empirical results and introduces the main finding, which is the Brand Archaeology Framework.

Chapter 6: discusses and elaborates on the findings and framework in a more outspread context while relating the framework and findings to previous literature.

Chapter 7: culminates by revisiting its purpose, research questions, aim, and objectives, then presenting its theoretical contributions and managerial implications. Additionally, the chapter discusses the research's limitations and offers suggestions for future studies in the field.

2 Methodology

The methodology chapter will elaborate upon the choices of research philosophy, approach, design, and methods used to gather data and reach the purpose of the thesis. The overarching research philosophy will be offered as a beginning point, with the constructivism paradigm serving as the study's guiding principle. The selection of a qualitative research design and an inductive methodology is then supported. Further, a multiple case study design is reviewed and provided along with the qualitative research techniques and data gathering utilized to collect the necessary data. The chapter will finally examine the sampling and data analysis before covering validity, dependability, accessibility, and ethical issues.

2.1 Research Philosophy

Easterby et al. (2015: p.46) pose the question: "how do philosophical factors affect the creation of satisfactory outcomes from the research activity?" – With this in the back of our minds, we deemed that it is essential for us to deeply comprehend, align and execute this research based on a set of philosophical points of view, to ensure that the quality of this research remains high.

Thus, before setting sail on the endeavor of writing this thesis, we need to determine our philosophical standing, which for the untrained, can seem daunting. However, following the advice of method scholars such as Easterby et al. (2015), and Bryman & Bell (2012), we will explain our stand and point of view.

Based on the "Four ring model" (figure 1) discussed by Easterby et al. (2015), we will work from an inside-out perspective by determining ontology and epistemology in two separate steps. Moreover, the two outer layers of the presented model will be addressed in this chapter's 'Research Strategy' and 'Research Design' sub-headings to create a clear and holistic explanation of our research.

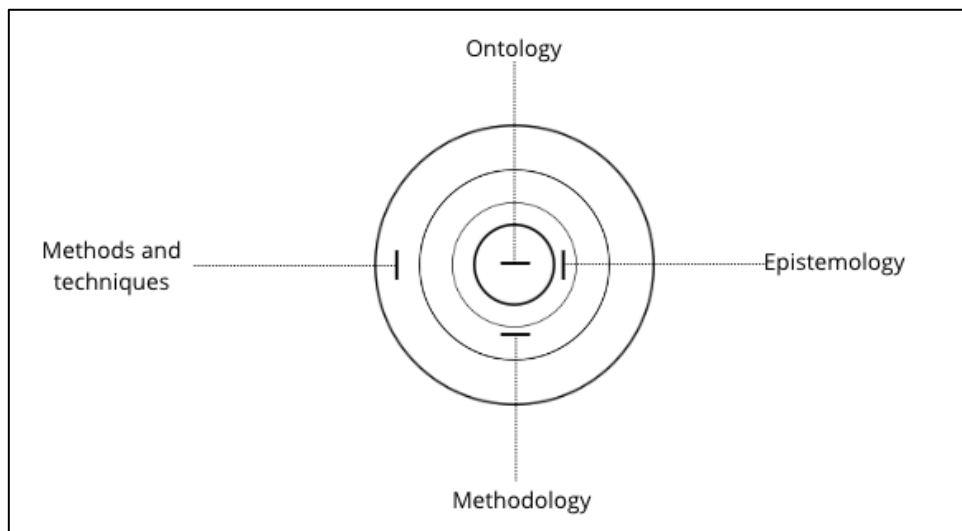


Figure 1: The four rings model (Easterby-Smith et al. 2015)

However, we must address the research paradigm before fully determining ontology and epistemology. Bryman & Bell (2012) introduces the thoughts and research conducted by Kuhn in 1970 (Bryman & Bell, 2012), who defines a paradigm in research as "a cluster of beliefs and dictates which for scientists in a particular discipline influence what should be studied, how research should be done [and] how results should be interpreted" (Bryman & Bell, 2012, p. 24). To expand upon this, Bryman & Bell (2012) explain that there are two axes of assumptions, regulatory and radical, which create the paradigm and influence the research. Additionally, there are four paradigmatic positions a researcher can place him/herself on the axes. However, due to the nature of this thesis, we will take a position within the paradigmatic 'interpretivism', which entails that understanding of an organization or brand, must be based on the people involved (Bryman & Bell, 2012) - which will be discussed later.

Let's take a minute to examine the ontology of this thesis before we get into the "meat" of it. It is critical to comprehend the idea of ontology in order to lay a firm foundation for our study. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) ontology is defined as "philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality", laying the foundation of any research. Perspectives on how data was collected and analyzed differ from researcher to researcher and research to research. Thus, we need to explain our standpoint to minimize the risk of future problems concerning reliability, validity, and generalizability. This thesis will take a relativism approach to ontology, i.e., meaning that our view of 'reality' is subjective. There is no one correct answer, or one right reality, which means that there are many ways of addressing the problematization of our thesis as we are looking back and trying to create the reality of the past through artifacts and other archaeological methods. Different viewpoints, subjective perspectives of reality, and openness will act as the foundation upon which this thesis will be built upon, much like archaeologists when drawing conclusions from the past. By having an open, interdisciplinary mind, interpretations of our world will create assumptions. Nevertheless, acting upon the relativism approach, we deem our assumptions as objective

facts due to the subjectivity of the ontology. Contradictions and opposing thoughts are essential in driving the expansion of knowledge and understanding, as they can act as verification through either dismissals or admissions.

Now that the core of the "Four ring model" is established, it is time to address epistemology, which is "A general set of assumptions about ways of inquiring into the nature of the world." (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015, p.47). This thesis will take a constructionism approach, which challenges the idea that an organization or brand is something pre-given and relevant actors as external to the issue at hand (Bryman & Bell, 2012). We argue that this falls in line with the aim of this thesis, as we are digging into the history of brands, attempting to create a framework based upon the actions, words, and experiences of the brands studied. Furthermore, we deem that everyone is a part of shaping the world, as we are all interconnected. Brands take inspiration from the external world, and by internalizing it - it innovates, moves forward, creates its own unique culture, and forms relationships accordingly.

2.2 Research Strategy

The third layer of the "Four ring model" constitutes that of methodology, i.e., "A combination of techniques used to inquire into a specific situation." (Easterby et al., 2015, p. 47). This step of the research design and methodology is of utmost importance, as this dictates the process of acquiring knowledge and will thus affect the outcome of this thesis.

2.2.1 Qualitative Research Strategy

There are two main types of research design perspectives, i.e., qualitative and quantitative. Bryman & Bell (2012) describes some significant differences between the two fields, and they are thematically focused on the perspective of the research and the researcher. The authors also argue that both fields have many benefits, but it all depends on the research goal.

Furthermore, by contrasting the perspectives, we concluded that a qualitative research strategy is most appropriate for this study. Bryman & Bell (2012) further explains the standpoints of the two research methods, where quantitative research focuses on numbers, theory testing, generalization, and the researcher's point of view in a structured manner. All these are well and good; however, for the relevance of our study, we will focus on their counterparts, i.e., words, theory emergence, contextual understanding, and the participant's point of view in an unstructured manner that will evoke appropriate discussion - which will generate data for this study.

Although there is a combination of the two, commonly referred to as 'mixed-method' - there are some arguments for why it is not the most efficient. The practical challenges, theoretical

quandaries, methodological biases, and restricted application to specific research subjects and situations are central to Bryman & Bell's (2012) arguments against mixed methods research. However, some researchers have made arguments in support of mixed-methods research, and the suitability of mixed-methods research depends on the research question and the nature of the phenomena under examination. Another claim is that mixed methods research might result in methodological and theoretical quandaries (Bryman & Bell, 2012). Combining diverse research methodologies and paradigms may be difficult because they sometimes include distinct assumptions about the nature of reality, the role of the researcher, and the study aims. Combining these paradigms in mixed methods research might lead to a lack of coherence and consistency in the study design, jeopardizing the findings' validity.

Bryman & Bell (2012) expresses that qualitative research emphasizes soft data, such as words and expressions, as the primary source of data and analysis. As this thesis is exploratory in its nature, intending to clarify brand archaeology's meaning, usefulness, and definition, a qualitative research strategy is the most suitable and appropriate method. We argue that there is a need for interaction, learning, and conversation to fully comprehend the underlying reasons for the pivotal moments, leading to a change in the brands used as case studies in this thesis. Moreover, we also argue that we need to interpret the "artifacts" found by analyzing interviews. Thus, interpretivism is a significant component of this thesis and lies in accordance with the description of the qualitative researcher's focus (Bryman & Bell, 2012).

2.2.2 Inductive Approach

There are two views of the relationship between theory and research (Bryman & Bell, 2012). On the one side, there is the inductive approach, where theory is generated through research, and on the other side, there is deductive, where the opposite occurs, i.e., research based on theory.

For the relevance of this thesis, we will take an inductive approach to satisfy the thesis's aim, i.e., to generate a theory based on our research. According to Bryman & Bell (2012), the inductive method uses evidence and observations to generate ideas and conceptions. Furthermore, the inductive approach aims to derive ideas and concepts from data analysis as opposed to the deductive approach, which begins with a hypothesis and seeks to test it using facts. This method enables academics to investigate novel concepts and occurrences that may have yet to be taken into account in the past. When conducting exploratory research with the intention of understanding a subject or phenomenon in greater depth, the inductive approach is beneficial. Thus, we can create new ideas and hypotheses by analyzing patterns and trends in the data. These ideas and theories can then be investigated and "put to the test" in subsequent studies.

The inductive approach entails the creation of theories and hypotheses from empirical observations and facts (Bryman & Bell, 2012). Instead of starting with a preconceived hypothesis and gathering data to support or refute it, we will for this study employ this

method as it obtains data and then develops a theory based on the study of that data. In exploratory investigations, where the study question or problem needs to be better defined and there needs to be more information available on the subject, inductive research is frequently used. Finding patterns, themes, and in our case, artifacts in the data and creating a theory to explain them are the objectives of the inductive approach. As we use archaeological-inspired methods and artifacts to interpret the world before us, we deem the inductive approach most suitable. Furthermore, interpretivism highlights the necessity of knowing and interpreting the social environment from the perspective of its inhabitants. The notion behind interpretivism is that social reality is produced via people's experiences and interactions with the world around them.

Our goal in this interpretivist study is to comprehend the meaning and relevance of human experiences and actions, as well as the cultural and social environment in which they occur. We thus believe that reality is subjective and socially produced and that knowledge is relative and contingent on the participants' viewpoints.

2.3 Research Design

A case study research design is a qualitative research method that involves the intensive examination of a single unit of analysis, such as an individual, group, organization, community, or event. The goal of case study research is to gain a detailed understanding of the unit of analysis and its context by collecting and analyzing various data sources. In a case study-focused research design, the research question is centered around a specific issue or phenomenon, which in our case is finding and contextualizing the pivotal decision-making moment within a brand, which we named brand archaeology.

As this thesis aims to generate a brand archaeology framework, it is argued that case studies are the most efficient way of determining a suitable outcome. Case studies look at a small number of organizations, events, and individuals over a period of time with different purposes depending on the philosophical standpoint of the researcher(s) (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). With the goal of developing a framework that managers can use when researching their own brand, this thesis will follow the method described by Eisenhardt (1989); Eisenhardt & Graebner (2007), which focuses on building theory on case study research. As stated by Easterby-Smith et al. (2015), the method of Eisenhardt is positioned between the positivist epistemology, which argues that many case studies are to be conducted to ensure reliability, and the constructivist epistemology, which argues for one or more case studies to be conducted. Eisenhardt further argues that the position allows for flexibility when conducting the research, as it allows and encourages conducting both cross-case and individual case analysis (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015), which will enrich the theory generation.

2.4 Sampling

2.4.1 Sampling of Cases

As this thesis aims to build a theory, and challenges of case selection are frequent within inductive research, Eisenhardt & Graebner (2007) suggest the theoretical sampling strategy. Eisenhardt & Graebner (2007) further explain that faulty sampling strategy assumptions are made, as many readers assume that the case should be representative of a population. The counterargument for this assumption is that large-scale representation is theory-proving and not theory-building. The theoretical sampling strategy does not mean the cases used are entirely random. Instead, they are selected because they are suitable for illustrating and further expanding upon the "relationships and logic among constructs" (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Another decision to be made is to decide upon a single-case study or a multiple-case study. As described by Yin (1994), single cases are straightforward, and their uniqueness chooses them in terms of revelation, extreme situations, or due to unusual access to the research area. Eisenhardt & Graeber (2007) further notes that single cases are mainly used when the opportunity to explore a specific phenomenon under "rare or extreme circumstances". Although single cases can provide detailed descriptions of a rare or extreme circumstance, its counterpart, multiple case studies, provides a stronger foundation for theory building (Siggelkow, 2007; Yin, 1994). Multiple cases create the opportunity to clarify if the findings are specific to one case or consistent throughout several cases (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Thus, multiple cases create a stronger foundation upon which theory can be built as it simplifies the determination of the accuracy of definitions and levels of constructionism (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

We have chosen to research three brands, i.e., the cases of Absolut Vodka, Ericsson, and Lemminkäinen - the decision to include these brands was due to their rich and long history and significance in their respective industries. Of the cases, one Finnish and one Swedish have changed their core business since its inception, i.e, Lemminkäinen (FIN) becoming part of YIT Group and Ericsson (SWE) becoming Sony Ericsson - and one brand has kept its core business since its inception, i.e., Absolut Vodka. Moreover, we further argue that corporate and societal cultures are different between the countries, and for the purpose of creating a theory anchored in archaeology, culture plays a big part in the interpretation of the past, as explained in the 'literature review' section. To further ensure the theory's depth, we wanted to explore whether there is a difference in the extent how the brand identity has changed depending on the 'radical' changes of the core business or not.

2.4.2 Sampling of Respondents

We are following a 'purposive sampling' strategy in conjunction with the concept of 'information power' (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015; Bryman & Bell, 2012) when sampling the respondents. Bryman & Bell (2012) explain that purposive sampling entails the researchers' samples with a particular goal in mind. The respondents are chosen because they know and understand a particular phenomenon through their lived experience within the brand. Thus, we need a specific unit of measurement and goal in mind when sampling the respondents. Following the purposive sampling method by Easterby-Smith et al. (2015), we decided upon criteria for eligibility. The guiding principle was to find former managers or directors at the chosen brands who have adequate information about the company's history, as well as close proximity in time to the pivotal moments of the brand. By following this principle and criteria, we cross-matched with former employees of the companies and found three eligible respondents.

2.5 Data Collection

As Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) describe, data is not something that exists and can be picked up and used instantaneously but rather something that is developed and grafted by the researcher. Eisenhardt (1989) explains that multiple data collection methods are common for theory-building researchers. In line with our thesis, we need to craft data from multiple sources to build a valid theory. Although Eisenhardt describes that using interviews, observations, and archival sources is the most common way, we decided to limit the sources to interviews, historical documents, and secondary documentation accessed through the brand's websites.

2.5.1 Interviews as Primary Data Source

Bryman & Bell (2012) explain that interviews are the most common method of collecting data within qualitative research. Furthermore, this method has many benefits as it encourages flexibility. Qualitative interviews emphasize the interviewees' perspectives and points of view on the phenomenon or topic and also allow for 'rambling' on subjects that the interviewee deems relevant and essential (Bryman & Bell, 2012). We argue that since this thesis aims to build a theory based on the knowledge and perspectives of the directors and managers we are interviewing, we need to fully understand the perspective and understanding of the situation during the pivotal moments - which we will not gain access to in another way. Letting the interviewees ramble on allows for a richer understanding and details of the situation leading up to the pivotal moments. Thus, structured interviews, the method of a strict list of questions to be answered in a standardized fashion, do not fulfill our needs.

Furthermore, there are two approaches to conducting qualitative interviews: unstructured and semi-structured. Unstructured interviews entail conversations based on sometimes one question, where the interviewee can speak freely about the subject and where the interviewer responds to points deemed as worthy (Bryman & Bell, 2012). However, this method has its cons, as the unstructured manner may lead to a conversation about everything from "heaven to earth" - which does not necessarily benefit the research. In order to keep the conversation "on the topic", we opted for a semi-structured interview. This method allows for flexibility and ramblings while still staying on topic. We use an interview guide (Appendix A) which will aid us in keeping the red thread throughout the interviews and allow for a greater chance of replication. Thus, the questions in the interview guide will all be asked. However, it also allows for flexibility as they may be asked in a different order, interview to interview, to keep the conversation flowing and on the topic (Bryman & Bell, 2012).

Nevertheless, as explained by Bryman & Bell (2012), all qualitative interviews lean towards one side or the other of the extremes between structured and unstructured interviews. As we need to understand the world from the interviewees' perspective, the semi-structured interview guide we have created allows for a more unstructured approach as we value the flexibility it creates. We also value the structure the interview guide provides through the semi-structured method on the other side, as we are conducting case studies. The structure ensures cross-case compatibility, increasing the data analysis quality (Bryman & Bell, 2012)

Furthermore, we employed a technique Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) describe as "laddering". This entails two possible methods of gaining more insight from the interviewees by asking follow-up questions to the answers to further the detail and richness by asking a simple question of "why" to a statement from the interviewee allows for a more descriptive understanding of the interviewee's perspective. This method is known as "laddering up" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). On the other hand, we also employed the "laddering down" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015), which entails asking for examples and details to further the insights.

Last but not least, the interviews we conducted were a mix of in-person and via videocall-streaming services like Zoom and Teams. The mixed selection was due to the availability of the interviewees, which we were eager to respect, as well as location differences during the thesis writing process. Furthermore, as stated by Easterby-Smith et al. (2015), the location of the interview is important. As we wanted to keep a neutral and relaxed setting, we asked the interviewee which setting they preferred. After conferring, we decided upon a location or format (digital or face-to-face) where both parties felt comfortable. In line with comfortability and relaxation, we conducted interviews in the language the interviewee felt most comfortable speaking. The languages used during the interviews were either English or Finnish. Concerning the language barrier, the Finnish-speaking interviewee agreed to have the interview translated after the interview. In order to make sure that the translation content was correct, we decided to let the interviewee confirm the transcript in an acceptable manner to minimize the risk of errors.

2.5.2 Documents as Secondary Data Source

With the technology available in today's society, with the internet, social media, company websites, and financial records one click of a button away, it would be foolish not to utilize this. Throughout our thesis, we have conferred to the companies' websites, historical books, and press releases to understand how the companies are perceived and their current brand identity. As described by Bryman & Bell (2012), 'documents' [data sources spanning from websites to newspapers and photographs] are "simply out there", and the reason why we argue that these are secondary sources is since the data is not produced for the purpose of this thesis. The data is assembled, categorized, scrutinized, and analyzed by us as this will offer rich opportunities to generate significant and profound data that would otherwise be left unexplored.

Thus, following the 'archival research' principles described by Easterby-Smith et al. (2015), we focused on the reports, press releases, and website content of the companies studied. We analyzed the textual information provided and accessed through public means, where language, tone, and written content were considered when developing the CBIM (described in the next chapter) in the current state of the brands.

2.6 Data Analysis

2.6.1 Structure of Empirical Results

When structuring our empirical findings, our approach aimed to maintain objectivity, avoiding preconceived notions and allowing the framework to emerge naturally from the analysis. We intended to develop a coherent framework gradually rather than imposing one from the outset, as Glaser and Strauss (1967) advocated. However, we also recognized the need to present the findings richly and descriptively, which required some form of structure. Drawing inspiration from Miles (1979), we adopted a rugged frame that allowed for coherence and relevance in the findings section of our thesis.

This rugged frame, influenced by Pöttker's (2003) concept of discovering "hard news" in investigating new phenomena, served as a guide for organizing our findings. Pöttker suggests that the most crucial information can be encapsulated in a lead sentence, which traditionally answers the "w-questions" of who, when, where, what, and why. However, for our thesis, we modified this approach to reflect the pivotal moments leading to changes in brand identity.

Accordingly, we employed the following guiding questions in structuring our findings: What were the pivotal moments? What were the reasons and consequences associated with these moments? How did brand identity and values evolve? By addressing these three holistic questions, we aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under

investigation. In conclusion, these three questions informed the structure of our empirical results, allowing for a comprehensive and overarching examination of the phenomenon.

2.6.2 Analyzing Qualitative Data

We have chosen to use a qualitative research method. Typically, qualitative research data collection, analysis, and theory development processes do not precisely follow a linear pattern. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2015), the data processing and interpretation process frequently overlaps, which is also true for this study. However, as stressed by Kvale (1994), showing the reader that the findings are the outcome of professional work throughout the entire research rather than prejudiced subjectivity is crucial. Transparency and plausibility are essential in constructionist research designs to support the quality and validity of outcomes (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). Furthermore, Eisenhardt (1989) asserted that while data analysis is thought to be the core of theory development from case studies, it is also the most difficult and least formalized step in the procedure. As a result, the reader will receive a concise and transparent description of the data analysis procedure in the following paragraphs.

Case-studies are part of our research design, and according to Eisenhardt (1989), case study research that seeks to develop a theory should do two types of data analysis: within-case analysis and cross-case pattern search utilizing various methods. Within-case analysis typically entails thorough descriptions of each site, which could include straightforward summaries that produce insights and help the researcher manage the enormous volume of data in the early phases of analysis. Although there are no set formats for this type of study, the main goal is to thoroughly grasp each case as a distinct entity. Before generalizing patterns across cases, this strategy permits specific patterns of each case to emerge (Eisenhardt, 1989).

We are cross-case analyzing our case-studies. Cross-case analysis consequently calls for researchers to get past first impressions and consider the data from several angles. This is essential because humans frequently digest information poorly and can draw conclusions from scant information (Kahneman & Tversky, 1973). Additionally, more influential respondents may improperly affect the study's results (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and intuitive thinking may result in erroneous understandings of the world (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). As a result, there is a chance of drawing erroneous or hasty conclusions, making it essential for researchers to carefully examine data to ensure accurate cross-case comparisons (Eisenhardt, 1989).

We are using metaphors to enhance our understanding of three cases studied. Three techniques are suggested by Eisenhardt (1989) for data analysis in case study research. The first method entails choosing dimensions or categories and looking for similarities within groups related to differences across groups. These dimensions may come from previously published works, the topic of the inquiry, or the dimensions the researcher has chosen. With the use of metaphors that will be discussed later, we chose the dimensions for this

investigation. Eisenhardt (1989) also suggests selecting pairs of examples and noting their similarities and differences. This method tries to shatter simple frameworks and produce a more complex understanding by contrasting seemingly identical examples and looking for differences. After acquiring all the data, we employed this strategy to treat the information honestly and spot disparities.

Eisenhardt (1989) recommends partitioning the data by source as the third approach. This strategy strengthens and grounds the conclusions by utilizing the distinctive insights that can be discovered through several data collection methods. A closer examination of the significance of the differences might aid the researcher in resolving any discrepancies between the evidence when it comes from disparate sources.

Our objective in the data analysis is to identify pertinent themes to organize the empirical data systematically. To do this, the Ryan and Bernard (2003) framework was used, which offers a variety of methods for locating themes. Four steps were involved in the analysis: The process of organizing the remaining themes based on their relevance to the research questions included (1) identifying themes and subthemes, (2) reducing the number of themes, (3) organizing the remaining themes hierarchically, and (4) connecting the themes and comparing them to the theory. Certain words and phrases indicated specific patterns when employed repeatedly across all scenarios. To narrow the scope of the research, topics like business partners and external stakeholders that did not apply to the research questions were left out. The topics were arranged according to how well they addressed the study questions, with "Moment" as the starting point and "Motives" as the ultimate objective. The research was then compared to current theories to confirm or disprove the findings that required more investigation.

We will be analyzing “artifacts”, as they reveal themselves throughout the excavation process of the framework. The artifacts refers to evidence of the underlying reasons for what caused the pivotal moment to occur. However, as events are usually linear in time, i.e. they occur after one another – artifacts deploy relevance depending where in the timeline they appear. The identification and analysis of artifacts will follow the reasoning described above.

2.6.3 Metaphors in Data Analysis

During our extensive exploration of branding literature, we encountered a disparity between our observations of the history and identity of three selected brands and the information provided by managers during interviews, in contrast to existing literature. To enhance our understanding of this phenomenon, we turned to metaphors to contextualize our findings. The term "metaphor" encompasses various definitions, including substituting one word for another with a distinct meaning, comparing ideas, or creating implicit analogies or similes (Ritchie, 2013). For instance, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, a metaphor is "the figure of speech in which a name or descriptive term is transferred to an object different from, but analogous to, that to which it is properly applicable" (Ritchie, 2013). Additionally, Ritchie

(2013) defines a metaphor as "seeing, experiencing, or discussing something in terms of something else". Rennstam (2023) proposed using metaphors to expand the relevance of theories and concepts, enabling fresh insights within a particular field of study and aligning with our research objectives.

Through a thorough examination and engagement with the material (Rennstam, 2023), we identified a recurring pattern across all three cases: pivotal moments that significantly impacted the future of the brands. This led us to conceptualize using archaeological findings, where we discovered metaphorical artifacts, culminating in developing the "Brand Archeology Framework". Moreover, our exploration of metaphors in research as a source of inspiration revealed that Urde and Koch (2014) argued for the central role of metaphors in refining knowledge by stimulating creativity and vitality.

Finally, it is crucial to note that we did not initially employ the definition of the metaphor during our comprehensive analysis. Instead, we coined it after thoroughly immersing ourselves in the data, enabling us to move beyond initial impressions and examine the evidence from multiple perspectives (Eisenhardt, 1989). While we considered alternative metaphors before settling on the archaeological framework, we ultimately chose it because we believe it effectively captures the phenomenon we investigated.

2.7 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are the two main components of assessing and establishing the quality of qualitative research. However, Bryman & Bell (2012) argue that there have been discussions regarding the terminology used within qualitative research, as validity implies a sense of measurement, which has little to no application to a research style focused on "soft values". With this, we will describe and discuss the two perspectives on the adapted versions of validity and reliability.

2.7.1 The Qualitative Adaptation of Validity and Reliability

Bryman & Bell (2012) argue that there is little change in the underlying meaning other than "playing down the salience of measurement issues". In other words, it is underplaying the relevance or impact of challenges in precisely measuring something. Thus, it denotes a failure to pay sufficient attention to or care for concerns pertaining to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. One can neglect possible concerns brought on by erroneous or unreliable data by downplaying the importance of measurement issues. This may result in incorrect conclusions being made about the data or improper actions being taken in light of those inferences. Therefore, it is crucial to carefully address measurement-related concerns and ensure that data is gathered, examined, and interpreted accurately and consistently.

Mason (1996) argues that validity, reliability, and generalizability “are different kinds of measures of the quality, rigor and wider potential of research, which are achieved according to certain methodological and disciplinary conventions and principles”. Thus, the standards and guidelines used to evaluate study quality might vary across various research approaches and domains. For instance, whereas in quantitative research, the emphasis may be on the validity and reliability of the results, in qualitative research, the emphasis may be on the richness and depth of the data.

Overall, this remark underlines the need to comprehend the many metrics used to gauge the caliber of research as well as the significance of abiding by the particular customs and standards unique to each research methodology and subject. Researchers may make sure their work complies with established criteria and can significantly contribute to the body of knowledge in their field by doing this.

Furthermore, LeCompte & Goetz (1982) further describes more appropriate terminology for the qualitative research field: external reliability, internal reliability, internal validity, and external validity. However, Bryman & Bell (2012) explains that these criteria are still very similar to the quantitative quality criteria and that there are alternative criteria for evaluating qualitative research. Thus, the mentioned terminologies above will be dismissed.

2.7.2 The Alternative Criteria – Trustworthiness and Authenticity

It has further been argued that qualitative research should be assessed and judged differently from quantitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2012). Lincoln & Guba (1985) and Guba & Lincoln (1994) express the necessity of specificity of the terminology further when assessing the quality of qualitative research. Thus, they propose trustworthiness and authenticity instead of relying on quantitative-focused validity and reliability.

We are developing theory and a framework. As a result, we believe that the trustworthiness and authenticity criteria are especially important, as they originate from an interpretivist perspective. These criteria, albeit subjective in nature, are critical in assuring the research's rigor. Peer review is the theory's ultimate quality control, allowing for critical examination and validation.

Furthermore, Guba & Lincoln, describe that trustworthiness and authenticity are compiled from their own subsequent criteria, which will be discussed next.

Table 1: Trustworthiness' four criteria

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Trustworthiness</i>	<i>Key aspects</i>
1	Credibility	Respondent validation
2	Transferability	Thick description
3	Dependability	Auditing
4	Confirmability	Good faith

We conducted interviews, and some language barriers arose. Thus, in order to ensure accurate data collection and subsequent analysis, we employed the criteria of credibility. It is supposed to parallel internal validity, as LeCompte & Goetz (1982) describes. The concern here lies in the philosophical plain, as it is argued that the feasibility or credibility of a researcher's description of a particular element of social reality determines its acceptance, especially when there are several plausible explanations for that aspect. Thus, by establishing a credible path to the findings, it must ensure that the research carries out 'respondent validation', the act of letting the studied object confirm or deny the interpretation of the findings (Bryman & Bell, 2012).

The second criterion, transferability, entails a thorough evaluation of a small group of people or a specific location in order to get a thorough knowledge of the social phenomenon under consideration. Instead of looking for generalizable outcomes, as is more common in quantitative research, this technique stresses the contextual distinctiveness and relevance of the social reality being researched (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative research conclusions are not universal truths but rather elements particular to the situation and population researched. As a result, researchers must offer detailed descriptions of the cultural characteristics of the population and "setting" under study, sometimes known as "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). These descriptions serve as a resource for assessing the findings' applicability to various situations or groups (Bryman & Bell, 2012). Thus, the acceptability and usefulness of qualitative research findings are based on the depth of the data presented, as well as their applicability to the study topic and unique setting.

The third criterion, dependability, entails 'auditing' one's research as this ensures that all records of the research process are being kept and can be accounted for (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These records usually entail formulating the research problem, sampling process of participants, notes, transcripts, and analysis decisions, which should all be accessible (Bryman & Bell, 2012). This would simplify the peer review process and act as the audit.

The fourth and last criterion, confirmability, emphasizes the importance of acting in good faith during the research process. Thus, trying to the best of one's ability to stay objective and not let subjective values and beliefs influence the research (Bryman & Bell, 2012).

Furthermore, Guba and Lincoln (1994) presented authenticity for assessing the quality of qualitative research findings. The authenticity criteria underline the significance of guaranteeing the data's authenticity by ensuring that the conclusions are founded in the genuine experiences of the study participants.

To achieve authenticity, researchers must employ approaches that allow participants' voices to be heard while correctly reflecting their opinions and experiences. This criterion underlines the need to recognize participants' perspectives and understand the research's particular context (Bryman & Bell, 2012). According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), developing authenticity necessitates continual attention to the research process as well as the researcher's interaction with the study participants. They advocate for the researcher to be reflective and open about their assumptions and biases throughout the study process. This criterion seeks to guarantee that the findings correctly reflect the experiences and opinions of the participants and are trustworthy and reliable.

To summarize, the authenticity criterion stresses the importance of grounding research findings in the actual experiences of research participants, valuing their perspectives, and being transparent about the research process in order to establish trustworthiness and credibility in qualitative research.

2.7.3 Source Criticism

We interviewed managers who were actively involved in communication and decision making on a daily basis for this study. The honesty of the responders is an important aspect in the context of this investigation. It is critical to acknowledge that the assertions of the responders should be scrutinized and debated.

One component that needs to be emphasized is the link between the respondent's closeness to the event and the veracity of their testimony. Individuals who are closer in time and location to the events in issue are more likely to offer an accurate assessment of the situation (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1999).

However, proximity alone is insufficient for establishing the honesty of respondents' responses. While proximity in time and geography may increase the trustworthiness of the narrative source, it does not ensure correctness due to their potential personal biases. On the other hand, we believe that the responders' arguments are more credible because of their closeness and experience. Furthermore, it is crucial to note that the study's sample size is rather small, limiting the generalizability of the findings. The limited sample size may have an influence on the representativeness of the results and may introduce biases.

Furthermore, we argue that, in light of our research philosophy and the fact that our aim is to gain an understanding and interpretation of the brands' past and daily decision-making processes, we must acknowledge the subjective nature of our study and the interpretative aspects involved in exploring the brands' histories. We must then use a critical lens when

studying and interpreting data, taking into account diverse views, and being aware of potential biases.

When collecting secondary sources to be utilized for the purpose of the thesis, we acknowledged the possibility of them being biased. Furthermore, as Hair et al. (2019, p. 138) comment on secondary data collection that "data needs to be rigorously evaluated so that its advantages can be captured and its disadvantages controlled", i.e., questioning the authenticity of the used sources.

We utilized peer-reviewed articles and aimed to have well-cited texts to ensure its authenticity throughout the thesis. Additionally, books were used, however, with the credibility in mind – i.e., as the books are not under the peer-review system. Although, we argue that the cited books in our case were a key element to formulate a holistic thesis, and that they provided a better understanding of the phenomenon overall. Last, but not least, it must be stated that the Lund University Library database was the origin for all sources in this thesis.

2.7.4 Research Ethics

Creating theory and a framework is daunting, and corners to cut appear before many researchers. In order to contribute something that is beneficial, true and accurate, one has to stay ethical in terms of thinking and conducting the research. We argue that in order to stay on a truthful path, ethics needs to be considered. There is a responsibility on us to perform ethically as researchers. Furthermore, we argue that the interviewees status within the companies were prominent, there is a need to protect them from potential repercussions.

Bryman & Bell (2012) describes four ethical principles and concerns: harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception. However, they further explain that these overlap and that the extent of ethical principles in business research is more comprehensive than these four areas. Furthermore, as described by Akaah & Riordan (1989), the researcher has an obligation to the respondents and the study itself to stay truthful throughout the process. The study must be carried out ethically and morally acceptable to the field of research but also to us as humans.

In order to understand our process, we will explain how we thought and worked with ethics from the four principles and concerns described by Bryman & Bell (2012). Harm to participants extends further than physical and/or emotional harm, and it extends to harm to career prospects, self-esteem, and future employment opportunities (Bryman & Bell, 2012). When thinking of harm, most people do not think further than physical or emotional, which is why researchers must take a holistic perspective before embarking on a research journey. We all agree that physical and emotional harm is unacceptable, but taking one step back and realizing other potential repercussions is of utmost importance. For the sake of protecting the respondents and minimizing the risk of any harm, we have decided to keep them anonymous, regardless of their stance on the necessity of it. Although this risks the quality and potential of direct replication of this study, this thesis is theory-building research, which entails that a

basic framework of brand archaeology is created, and thus direct replication is not necessarily relevant.

In regards to lack of informed consent and invasion of privacy, Bryman & Bell (2012) explain that most debates focus on the data collection methods of disguised and/or covert observation and when the ‘right to privacy’ is transgressed through any means of methods. In order to combat the lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception, we decided to inform the respondents fully of our research purpose. We further provided them with the background of the phenomenon we aim to build theory around in order to fully inform and minimize the risk of deception. After explaining that they can exit the interview process at any moment, voice any concerns and that they will be kept anonymous, they would either accept or deny our request. When accepted, we started the interview with transparency.

2.7.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is critical for guaranteeing the integrity and rigor of research, especially when recording subjective "facts" within the context of the instances under inquiry. As Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) note, researchers must be mindful of their own roles and personal biases in order to stay impartial in their knowledge and interpretation of respondents' experiences.

In the case of our study, reflexivity was a critical factor that influenced our approach throughout the whole research process. We realized the need of being conscious and sensitive to many aspects of knowledge formation, such as language nuances, social dynamics, and political undercurrents that developed throughout data collecting and analysis.

We hoped to reduce the influence of our own preconceived beliefs or assumptions on the data and conclusions by adopting reflexivity. We noted that our own viewpoints and backgrounds impacted our comprehension and interpretation of the study material. As a result, we actively participated in self-reflection, examining our own biases and subjectivities on a regular basis to ensure that they did not disproportionately impact the research conclusions.

We were able to retain a critical position by continually questioning and reevaluating our own assumptions, interpretations, and actions thanks to reflexivity. It allowed us to evaluate various points of view and challenge our own assumptions, resulting in a more thorough and nuanced grasp of the research topic.

Furthermore, reflexivity aided us in recognizing and resolving possible power dynamics and inequalities between researchers and respondents. We worked hard to create a secure and welcoming study atmosphere that promoted open and honest discourse while respecting the participants' perspectives and experiences.

We hoped to improve the validity and dependability of our findings by actively embracing reflexivity throughout the study process. It enabled us to negotiate the complexity of subjective data and develop conclusions based on the depth and subtleties of the study setting.

Finally, reflexivity was an important tool in sustaining the impartiality and rigor of our study project.

2.7.6 Politics and Access

Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) argue that most organizational research is politicized, as stakeholders may want to influence the direction and result of the research. They further argue that 'gatekeepers' may dictate the narrative in order to further their personal-professional agenda. This still applies to some extent in our study, as we are interviewing former directors within the companies studied, although avoiding the risk of a 'power struggle' between two parties. However, we acknowledged that there was a risk that "ego" takes over, and semi-truths are expressed during the interviews, as everyone wants to look better than reality sometimes depicts. There is a further difficulty in verifying the information, except for confirming with the interviewee that we have interpreted the conversations correctly.

We are fortunate in regards to access, as our personal networks are quite extensive. In line with our 'purposive sampling' strategy, we knew what type of respondents we needed in order to achieve the best results possible. We have quasi-personal relations with former directors for the chosen companies, Absolut, Lemminkäinen, and Ericsson. When we described our thesis's aim, phenomenon, and ambitions, the former directors were more than eager to accept.

3 Literature Review

This chapter of the thesis will explain and inform the reader of what theories and research areas will be covered and utilized when building the theory. The first section, archaeology, will be presented in order to familiarize the reader with the basic concepts of this multi-faceted field of research. This section will also introduce the phenomenon of "brand archaeology". The second concept that will be described is Corporate Brand Identity, with the foundation in the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM) developed by Urde (2013). The third and last theoretical field that will be presented is storytelling and how it is utilized in theory and practice, as this field deals with how communication and expression are employed internally and externally.

3.1 Archeology

To clarify the actual meaning of brand archeology and bring it back from the late 80s dust to the 21st century in the context of this research, one must first understand the basics of its foundation, namely the concept of "old-fashioned" archeology. Archeology is a widely used term often thrown around without considering its true meaning more deeply - leading to misrepresentations and confusion among broad audiences. From famous movie characters like Indiana Jones, i.e., the archeologist Dr. Indiana Jones, to a mixture of historical documentaries of the ancient world, we need to familiarize ourselves with the original phenomenon before diving into the depths of its brand counterpart.

Archeology is the study of human history and prehistory via the physical remnants of earlier human activities connected to a specific timeline. These remnants are interpreted and explained using archaeological theory, i.e., processual archaeology, post-processual archaeology, and cognitive archaeology, as the three major theoretical strands (Renfrew & Bahn, 2018). Processual archaeology, in its simplicity, strongly emphasizes the scientific investigation of cultural evolution and change, and it aims to explain patterns in human behavior by carefully examining material culture (Renfrew & Bahn, 2018). For example, excavations uncovering a society's cooking utensils might provide insight into how major climactic shifts impacted agricultural communities.

The scientific positivism of processual archaeology is often criticized (Renfrew & Bahn, 2018). In contrast, post-processual archaeology is emphasized (Renfrew & Bahn, 2018) as it provides a more precise method, focusing on the significance of comprehending earlier cultures' social and cultural backgrounds (Renfrew & Bahn, 2018). Third but not least,

explaining patterns in material culture, cognitive archaeology aims to comprehend the mental processes and cognitive structures of ancient societies (Renfrew & Bahn, 2018). Moreover, it requires knowing how people think and perceive their surroundings. These three theoretical perspectives offer various means of comprehending the past, and each perspective has advantages and disadvantages of its own (Renfrew & Bahn, 2018). However, as this study focuses on finding artifacts labeled as metaphors, the processual archaeological method is one of interest in determining "brand archaeology."

As the fundamental act of archeology can be defined as "digging deep" to discover and understand something unknown from the past - to explain the future - structurally, so does this thesis. To reach this deeper understanding, we understood that the only way is to have an expert's point of view. Therefore, an interview was already conducted in the methodological section with a Finnish archeologist with over 35 years of field experience studying domestic and international archeology sites. The interview was conducted in Finnish, recorded and transcribed, and finally translated into English. Moreover, the archeologist is marked as anonymous, respecting the interviewee's wishes.

According to the interviewee's wording, archeology is "authentication of antiquity - bringing knowledge out of the research chamber to the fore," further explaining in a broader perspective how archeological research has changed and is more "outwards focused", i.e., bringing knowledge to a larger audience.

The interviewee explains two types of "digging strategies" essential to understanding while conducting archeological work, i.e., layer and level-digging. A "layer-dig" strategy consists of removing one layer at a time from the whole research area, for example, digging in sections of 5 centimeters from the whole area. Conversely, a "level-dig" removes a level of one specific turf, making the dig uneven in depth, but even in the removed layer. These two strategies can be used separately or as a mixed method. After distinguishing these elements, the interviewee further divided the archeological work into three main categories, i.e., preparatory work, excavation, and archeological synopsis - which are elaborated on below:

Preparatory work - consists of going through and gathering all information redeemed as interesting and essential for the research. Examples of this step include studying maps, specific area history, contracts, shipping books, old turf samples, etc.

Excavation - is the actual act of digging in and making discoveries. This step also includes mapping out, collecting, and analyzing the discoveries. This step usually happens in two phases, i.e., 1. making a discovery, also called "groundwork", and 2. collecting and analyzing it, called "post-work".

Archeological synopsis - is the act of summarizing the research's totality and connecting it to history and other relevant counterparts. Examples of this could be finding a "liitupiippu" i.e.,

an ancient pipe that is branded, and connecting this to similar findings across the world - making a connection with this specific discovery and area with something unexpected.

These three categories will work as guiding lines as the study continues and will be further explained in later sections.

3.1.1 Brand Archeology

Brand archaeology has been discussed, although in a limited manner, within the field of brand research. Scholars such as Keller (1998) and Haugtvegt & Carlsson (1998) only scraped the surface. In "Brand archaeology: Uncovering the past of branded products", Keller (1988) discusses the concept of brand archaeology and its potential for uncovering the history and evolution of branded products. Keller (1988) defines brand archaeology as "the exploration of a brand's history as a means of enhancing its identity and creating a strategic platform for its revitalization." Keller argues that the history of a brand can be a critical element in its identity and that understanding this history can help shape a brand's future. Keller provides examples of successful brand archaeology, including the revitalization of the 'G. H. Mumm' champagne brand by uncovering its historical association with horse racing. The author also outlines a framework for conducting brand archaeology research, including identifying key historical events and trends, exploring primary and secondary sources, and conducting interviews with brand insiders and experts. Overall, the article emphasizes the importance of looking to a brand's past to inform its future strategies and identity.

Furthermore, Haugtvedt and Carlson (1998) explore the concept of brand archaeology as a method for rediscovering lost brands and brand meanings. The authors define brand archaeology as "a process of uncovering historical artifacts and clues about brands, including their origins, evolution, and associations". This process involves examining archival records, old advertisements, and other historical materials to gain insight into the brand's past and to understand its place in the cultural context of its time. The authors argue that brand archaeology can provide valuable insights for brand managers seeking to revitalize their brands by tapping into the historical resonance of the brand and reestablishing its connection with consumers. The article provides several examples of successful brand archaeology campaigns, such as the revival of the Absolut Vodka brand, which involved rediscovering the brand's historical roots and promoting its distinctive bottle design. The authors conclude that brand archaeology is a powerful tool for building brand equity and creating brand meaning and that it can be particularly useful for brands with a long history or strong cultural associations.

Since it has been 25 years since the most recent of the two articles were written, there is, with respect, a need for some modernizing. Both of the articles describe the notion of going back into the history of the brand in order to rediscover their lost identity. Both agree that brand archaeology is a tool, which we also argue that it is. However, for the sake of this thesis, we

argue that brand archaeology is more than just a method of revitalizing or re-position a brand, but a way to guide future decision-making by analyzing decisions of the past and its evolution. There are, however, changes occurring at a rapid pace, where innovation is taking place on a daily basis, and that aspect needs to be taken into consideration when formulating our definition of brand archaeology.

Brand Archaeology is the exploration and systematic study of a brand's past with the aim of discovering and understanding its pivotal moments which shapes its brand identity and strategic brand management.

3.2 Corporate Brand Identity

The concept of corporate brand identity has been the subject of extensive marketing and management literature research, with scholars investigating its definition, components, and strategic implications.

The concept of "corporate brand" is something that can be considered relatively new within the space of marketing and management research. The concept was born during the first half of the 1990s, as marketing and communications consultants started to realize that the "company brand" (corporate brand) was of utmost importance and that the responsibility of the brand was held by the CEO (Balmer & Gray, 2003). During the second half of the century, the concept gained more traction as more academics began to dive deep into the "new" phenomenon, which provided the foundation of countless academic research projects within branding (Balmer & Gray, 2003; Iglesias et al. 2022).

Although the article mainly focuses on brand equity, Keller (1998), one of the most influential researchers in this field, argued that 'corporate branding' is essential for a company's marketing strategy. According to Keller (1998), it represents the personality and image of the 'company' (corporation) in the mind of its key stakeholders.

Furthermore, Balmer & Gray (2003) defines corporate brand identity as "the set of visual, verbal, and symbolic attributes that represent a company to its stakeholders". Kapferer (2012) further enriches the definition with "it encompasses the company's name, logo, tagline, colors, fonts, and other visual elements, as well as its communication style, values, personality, and other intangible aspects". Hatch & Schultz (2001) further describes that corporate brand identity is not only about external recognition - but also looks inwards toward all its stakeholders, arguing that internal unity and coherence are essential.

According to Urde (2003), two groups categorize corporate brand identity components, i.e., tangible elements and intangible elements. The former consists of the company's name, logo, colors, and other easily identifiable and reproduced visual elements. The latter is composed of the company's culture, values, style of expression and communication, and other aspects which are difficult to measure and/or define (Urde, 2003). Both categories are imperative for

creating a strong corporate brand identity (Ind, 2001). Furthermore, as described by Abratt & Mingione (2022) in “The Routledge Companion of Corporate Branding” a company brand is perceived by stakeholders as having the assets and expertise to offer value to them. Although every organization has a corporate brand and develops a reputation over time, strong corporate brands and reputations are impossible to imitate completely due to the unique sets of assets, skills, and decisions made by organizations, as well as the wide range of dimensions used by stakeholders to evaluate corporate brands and reputations.

Corporate brand identity has significant strategic repercussions for firms since it affects their reputation, competitiveness, and overall performance. An organization can gain new customers, enhance consumer trust and loyalty, and differentiate itself from competitors by having a clearly defined and well-managed corporate brand identity (Balmer & Greyser, 2006). Furthermore, employee morale and productivity may increase if the company's internal culture and values are consistent with its public image (Davies & Chun, 2002). However, a weak or inconsistent corporate brand identity can damage a company's reputation and make its stakeholders lose trust and loyalty (Hatch & Schultz, 2008).

3.2.1 Difference Between Product Brand and Corporate Brand

It is essential to differentiate the different fields of the brand spectrum to minimize the risk of misunderstanding for the sake of this thesis. Based on previous literature, this sub-heading will clarify the difference between a product brand (which we have limited off) and the focus of this study, a corporate brand.

Balmer & Gray (2003) describes the key differences between a corporate brand and a product brand in depth, which will be the foundation of limitation upon what we will work on. They describe it as follows "in conceptualization is that corporate brand values tend to be grounded in the values and affinities of company founders, owners, management and personnel, whereas product brand values tend to be contrived and are the product of the not inconsiderable skills of invention held by marketing and advertising creatives" (Balmer & Gray, 2003).

Hence, the founders, owners, managers, and employees of a firm are considered to have established the organization's values and affinities as its foundation. This suggests that the history, culture, and mission of the business, as well as the beliefs and values of the people participating in its operations, form the foundation for the corporate brand's values.

On the other hand, product brand values are characterized as manufactured and the result of marketing and advertising creatives' talents. This argues that the process of developing a distinctive identity for the good or service results in the creation of product brand values. These ideals could not be rooted in the company's history or culture but rather in consumer trends, market research, and branding tactics.

The statement provided by Balmer & Gray (2003) thus suggests that there is a conflict between the creativity and innovation of product brand values and the authenticity and integrity of corporate brand values. Product brand values can be considered as more dynamic and adaptable to shifting market trends and customer preferences, in contrast to corporate brand values, which may be seen as being more true and authentic. Finding the ideal balance between the two strategies is necessary for successful branding because each has advantages and disadvantages.

Furthermore, Urde (2003) describes product brands as highly individual in terms of their identity and core values. Contrarily, a corporate brand is the organization's complete brand identity, which includes its principles, culture, reputation, and image. All of the company's products and services are linked to this brand because it is its primary one. Corporate branding entails forging a unified and cohesive brand image across all facets of the business, including its services, products, personnel, advertising, and marketing. Iglesias et al. (2022) further describes, while product branding strives for consumer happiness and service branding strives to develop trusted connections with customers, corporate branding takes into account the demands and expectations of many other stakeholders.

Additionally, Urde (2021) explains that a corporate brand is bilateral in the sense that it has internal and external influences. Hence, the corporate brand will always be co-created. The external influences of a brand will extend the pre-existing value-proposition by bridging the gap of emotional connection through means of communication and storytelling, whilst internal influences will constantly shape and reposition the brand through values, goals and purpose (Urde, 2021).

3.2.2 Corporate Brand Identity Matrix

The Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM) is a hybrid framework (matrix) developed by Urde (2013) and has been further developed throughout the years. In the recent edition of “The Routledge Companion of Corporate Branding, 2022”, Urde published an extract from his upcoming book regarding the ‘matrix’, and as the most recent addition to this field, we argue that it is of relevance for this thesis.

The rationale behind describing the matrix as a “hybrid” is due to its application within both the theoretical and managerial fields. The matrix applies to all businesses, no matter their orientational philosophies. It is conceptually “applicable” for a market-oriented (outside-in), brand-oriented (inside-out), or a mix of them both, as visualized in the figure below:

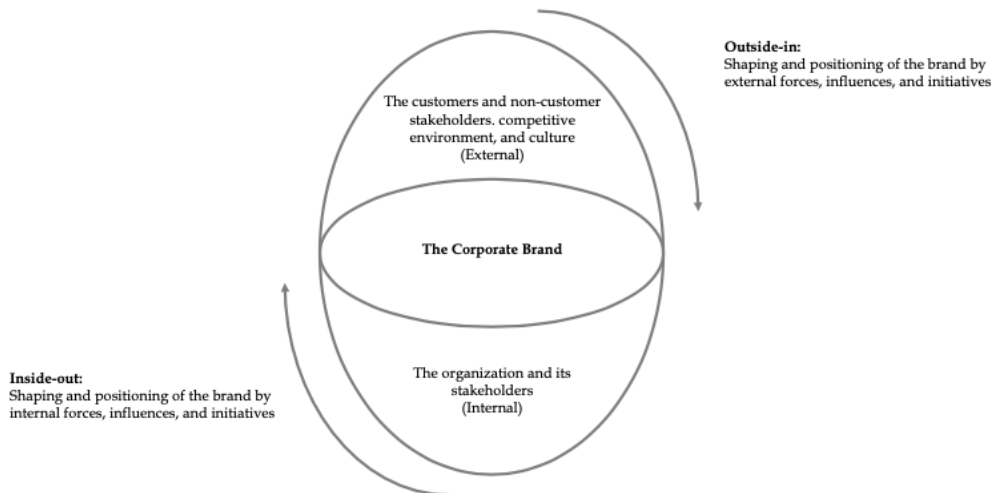


Figure 2: Orientation egg (Urde, 2021)

The matrix is composed of nine elements, grouped into three categories, namely, internal, internal/external, and external, which will be described further.

Internal Elements

Mission and Vision:

This element is of utmost importance, as this answers the questions of the brand's existence and is the literal cornerstone of the matrix. The mission aims to place words on why the corporation exists and what makes it "tick" - in human terms, what makes it get out of bed in the morning. On the other hand, the vision has a more inspiring aspect, which explains where the corporation is going and how it is heading there (Urde, 2013). Thus, the mission and vision within the matrix aim to describe the "why" behind the faith and belief the internal stakeholders have for the brand or corporation. Furthermore, putting the mission and vision into words means it actualizes the element, which acts as a guiding light in dark times of confusion and aimlessness.

Culture:

When the question of "why" the internal stakeholders have faith and belief in the corporation, culture answers the "what". Culture is the values, attitudes, and beliefs the organization employs and how it behaves (Hatch & Schultz, 2001; Urde, 2013).

Furthermore, Kapferer (2012) defines corporate culture as "shared values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and customs that characterize an organization and guide its practices and

interactions". Thus, he describes how things are being done within a corporation. This reflects the brand's identity and how internal stakeholders interact and behave with each other and external stakeholders. In order to develop a consistent and unified brand image, Kapferer (2012) underlines the significance of integrating corporate culture with the organization's brand identity and values. He advises businesses to work to create an innovative, creative, and engaged workplace culture that also reflects the brand identity and values of the organization.

Competences:

Urde's (2013) rationale behind including the element of "competence" is explained as "...strategic relevance relating to the creation and maintenance of sustainable competitive advantage". Thus, what are we good at?

Prahalad & Hamel (1990) describes, in an illustrative way, the importance of internal competences as "The corporation, like a tree, grows from its roots. Core products are nourished by competencies and engender business units, whose fruits are end products".

Thus, instead of attempting to be all things to all clients, Prahalad and Hamel (1990) contend that businesses should make investments in strengthening and enhancing their core skills. Instead of attempting to establish new competencies for each new product or market, they advise businesses to concentrate on developing a portfolio of core competencies that can be used across a variety of goods and markets.

Overall, the authors emphasize the significance of recognizing and utilizing core talents as a vital factor in a company's long-term success. Companies may stand out from their rivals and offer clients a better experience by concentrating on their core competencies.

Internal/External Elements

Expression:

This element describes the importance of a clear visual identity, and verbal/written tone, which should be unique and synonymous with the brand (Urde, 2013).

Furthermore, Balmer (2008) makes use of a number of theoretical frameworks describing such as organizational identity, social identity, visual identity, corporate brand identity, and corporate image. He contends that these multiple viewpoints provide important insights into how various stakeholders view businesses and how they produce meaning and value for their consumers. Balmer (2008) argues that corporate identity is a complex and multifaceted concept involving tangible and intangible elements. He suggests that corporate identity is shaped by a variety of factors, including organizational culture, values, history, and reputation, as well as visual and symbolic elements such as logos, slogans, and packaging.

Brand Core:

This illustrates the matrix's heart and the brand's source of life. Urde (2013) defines it as "an entity of core values supporting and leading up to a promise". This is what gives the brand life, its essence, and is the gear that creates a functioning brand. Thus, it needs to fit perfectly for the rest of the operation to work properly and effectively, and everyone needs to be on board with what the core values are and what they represent (Urde, 2003). It is further emphasized that the core needs to be dynamic, guiding, and unique for building a successful brand (Urde, 2003).

However, it is interesting how core values can "prove to be" versatile for businesses. Osbourne (1991) described that values can be the factors and/or result behind strategic change and growth. By shaping the "value statement", Osbourne (1991) argues that it can leverage growth for a business.

Thus, by shaping the brand core, it affects the surrounding elements within the matrix. E.g., with a revised core, the value proposition and competences may change, which can positively affect the competitive landscape for a business (Urde & Greyser, 2019).

Personality:

Urde (2013) defines it as "the combination of characteristics or qualities that form the corporate character". The personality element is distinct from the product brand personality, which relates to consumer and user imagery for a specific product brand. The personality element is more dependent on the personality of the corporation's employees. Furthermore, it highlights that a responsible manager must ask an essential question about the combination of human characteristics or qualities that form the corporate character. The corporation's personality is shaped by how it is expressed, indicating a correspondence between the personality element and the way it is expressed, as shown by the arrow in the matrix. Moreover, it emphasizes the importance of aligning the corporate character with the expression of the personality element.

External Elements

Value Proposition:

The CBIM's value proposition component refers to the employment of persuasive arguments aimed at both customers and other stakeholders (Urde, 2013). A strong brand-customer connection should lead to favorable purchasing decisions and a positive reputation (Greyser, 2009) as a result of a compelling value proposition. This underscores the problem encountered by managers in building particular value propositions that connect with the overarching brand core.

Relationships:

According to Urde (2013), establishing and developing relationships over time indicate a corporate brand identity, which contributes to the brand's conduct and behavior. Kapferer (2012) additionally notes that choosing a brand involves selecting a relationship. The CBIM underscores the link between relationships and culture through a vertical arrow. An organization with a corporate brand must reflect its service delivery, customer interactions, and relationships with them in its corporate brand identity. Since a corporate brand often caters to multiple audiences, it must integrate multiple relationships.

Position:

This element is multi-faceted. It refers to the strategic position a brand may/want to hold within their respective markets, as well as within the minds of the consumer and other key stakeholders (Urde, 2013; Keller et al, 2012).

Furthermore, this is different from the usual meaning of "positioning." The position element serves as a reference point for the positioning process that follows the definition of the corporate brand identity. Choosing a desired position is a way to differentiate the brand identity. The CBIM framework emphasizes the link between the position and the mission and vision of the organization through a diagonal arrow. This indicates the need to align the organization's reason for being and its direction with the intended position. In summary, the position element is an important part of the CBIM framework that helps management determine how to differentiate the brand and align it with the organization's mission and vision.

EXTERNAL	<p>VALUE PROPOSITION <i>What are our key offerings and how do we want them to appeal to customers and non-customer stakeholders?</i></p>	<p>RELATIONSHIPS <i>What should be the nature of our relationships with key customers and non-customer stakeholders?</i></p>	<p>POSITION <i>What is our intended position in the market, and in the heart and minds of key customers and non-customer stakeholders?</i></p>
INTERNAL/ EXTERNAL	<p>EXPRESSION <i>What is distinctive about the way we communicate and express ourselves and makes it possible to recognize us at a distance?</i></p>	<p>BRAND CORE <i>What do we promise, and what are the core values that sum up the essence of what our brand stand for?</i></p>	<p>PERSONALITY <i>What combination of human characteristics or qualities forms our corporate character?</i></p>
INTERNAL	<p>MISSION AND VISION <i>What engages us (mission) and what is our direction and inspiration? (vision)</i></p>	<p>CULTURE <i>What are our attitudes and how do we work and behave?</i></p>	<p>COMPETENCES <i>What are we particular good at, and what makes us better than the competition?</i></p>

Figure 3: The Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Urde, 2013)

Corporate Brand Identity Matrix Paths

Urde (2021) describes a method of analyzing the matrix through the concept of "walk the paths", i.e., dividing the matrix into paths, aiming to strength-test four key organizational dimensions in relation to the brand's identity. In contrast, to identify consistencies, gaps, and irregularities - the paths' connections should be solid to create a strong matrix, resulting in a strong identity (Urde, 2021).

The first path is known as the "Strategy path", and the diagonal path starts in the "Mission & Vision" element, crossing over the "Brand Core" into the "Position" element. The "strategy path" is deemed strong if these elements are aligned, consistent, and avoid contradictions.

The second diagonal path is referred to as the "Competition path." This route begins with the brand's "Value Proposition," continues via the "Brand Core," and concludes with the "Competences" element. This path is regarded as strong if the brand's present competencies are enough to execute on the brand's promises and allow for an appealing value proposition (Urde, 2021).

The third path, "Interaction", is the vertical path originating in the brand's 'Culture', bridging over 'Brand Core' into 'Relationships'. This path determines whether the organizational values and culture are engaging internal and external stakeholders (Urde, 2021).

The fourth and last path, "Character", has its basis in the brand's "Personality". This, in terms, is connected with the "Brand Core" and "Expression". This path assesses how well the corporate personality is communicated internally and externally (Urde, 2021).

Thus, it is important for any brand to have logically flowing paths that interplay with the element before it in order to create a stable matrix. It is important that the paths flow in both directions and that the narrative is clear and consistent throughout the matrix - a stable matrix results in a strong corporate brand identity (Urde, 2021).

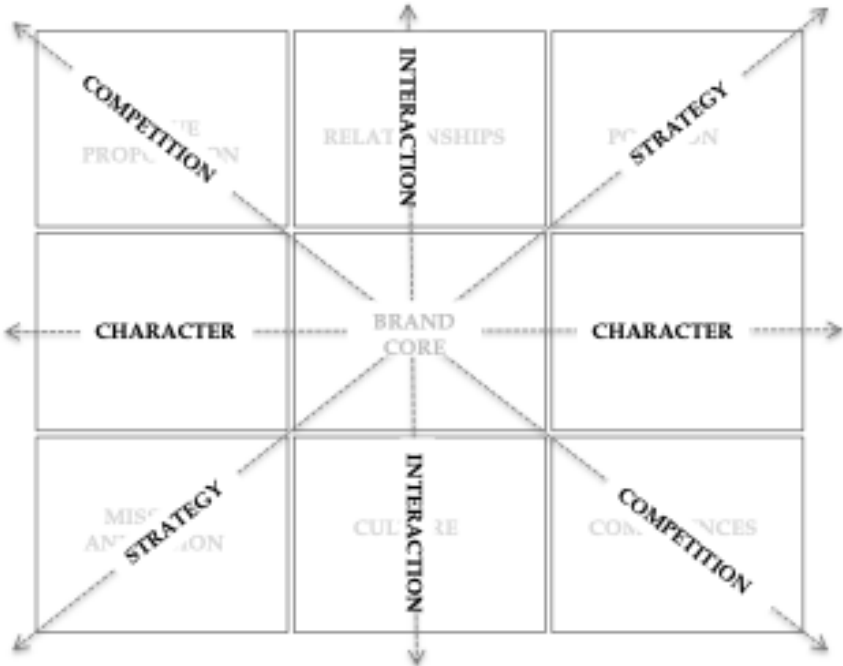


Figure 4: The Four Paths (Urde, 2021)

3.3 Storytelling

In today's modern and notoriously competitive environment, where every detail has an impact and time is literally money - one must take a step back, breathe, and just be present. It is just as crucial for organizations as it is for individuals to take this moment and give it a chance for reflection. This vital moment is, for example, what Kapferer (2012) describes with the utilization of his Brand Identity Prism, an approach to refine a brand's identity and essential characteristics to be aligned throughout the entirety of the organization and to be recognizable both internally and externally. A brand is a complexity of elements that travel through the

core identity of who we are and why we do what we do, as previously illustrated in the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM) by Urde (2012). Furthermore, a concept, or more specifically, a tool helping the formation of this very idea, is storytelling.

In today's modern and notoriously competitive environment, where every detail has an impact and time is literally money - one must take a step back, breathe, and just be present. It is just as crucial for organizations as it is for individuals to take this moment and give it a chance for reflection. This vital moment is, for example, what Kapferer (2012) describes with the utilization of his Brand Identity Prism, an approach to refine a brand's identity and essential characteristics to be aligned throughout the entirety of the organization and to be recognizable both internally and externally. A brand is a complexity of elements that travel through the core identity of who we are and why we do what we do, as previously illustrated in the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM) by Urde (2012). Furthermore, a concept, or more specifically, a tool helping the formation of this very idea, is storytelling.

According to Hopkinson and Hogarth-Scott (2001), a "story" can take one of three different forms: a factual report, a myth based on a short, or a narrative. They suggest that a narrative story presents a genuine or imagined event in a logical order. Such stories are susceptible to the development of realism, and the descriptive language is carefully selected to give the story a realistic sound (Hopkinson & Hogarth-Scott, 2001). In this way, it is simple for audiences to empathize with and put themselves into characters in a story. Contrarily, Fisher (1984) emphasizes the dramatic aspects of the narrative story. He explains that a story is full of unresolved issues and potential outcomes, building tension up to the conclusion. This idea also heightens the audience's empathy for the characters (Fisher, 1984).

Furthermore, it is discussed that the use of narrative stories is exceptionally compelling, and as a result, businesses frequently use this storytelling format as a way to engage stakeholders (Denning, 2006). Denning (2006) also notes that this creates an emotional connection through empathy and effectively together communing the brand's message to stakeholders.

3.3.1 Storytelling in Modern Context

Storytelling is a term that has been thrown around, twisted, and tweaked quite regularly in today's world, but when contextualized and reflected upon, it can have much deeper roots than just a fancy buzzword. It touches upon something familiar but contributes to a new consciousness and takes a firm hold in our future vocabulary. According to Fog et al. (2010), for companies, storytelling is an indispensable tool for making their core culture visible and creating a shared direction, i.e., helping companies find their unique story. Businesses can translate their company culture to their departments, products, services, and other areas in a way that is authentically rooted, downwards and upwards, inside and out, thanks to the authentic core story, which demystifies a company's culture and makes it tangible and visible (Fog et al., 2010). The only way to build a strong company culture and brand is to first develop your company culture before making it public. A strong corporate culture cannot be

purchased. Experience has demonstrated, according to Fog et al. (2010), that a solid corporate culture is what makes the long-term viability of business plans. The biggest obstacle to a strong culture that supports the strategy and the employees' desire to adopt it is the "Silo" attitude, which will be covered later. According to Fog et al.'s (2010) experience, a silo mindset is the number one enemy of businesses seeking to transform, unite, and forge a solid company culture.

3.3.2 The Four Elements of Storytelling

Throughout human history, as we know it [reaching all the way back to ancient Greece and Aristoteles's dramas] , people have always been closely related to stories, whether it be something that you listened to as a child or something factual discussed by professionals – stories, fiction or not, create an understanding of the past, present, and the future (Fog et al., 2010). However, not all stories "make the cut" and become known to larger audiences. Scott (2010) discusses the notion of stories becoming a part of history by the act of storytelling and points out that when the same story is repeated constantly by various actors, it comes to life. It is, therefore, essential to understand how and why good stories become great stories and, most importantly, stories that live on.

Fog. et al. (2010) divide storytelling into four key elements that build a story that can be considered "strong" and live on. The author quotes, "Like the four elements of nature - earth, wind, fire and water - there are four elements that make up the core basis of storytelling" (Fog. et al., 2010, p. 32). The elements, however, are not a fixed formula and vary from situation to situation - nevertheless, there is a pattern that can be identified and used as a guideline.

The four elements of storytelling by Fog. et al. (2010) are 1. Message, 2. Conflict, 3. Characters, and 4. Plot - in this respective order. The elements work as one unit, where you move from the first to the last, and only by implementing all, will the act of storytelling be considered "complete."

Message:

It takes more than just telling stories for the sake of telling them for businesses to use storytelling as a branding tool. It entails the use of narratives to deliver messages that favorably portray the company's brand (Fog et al., 2010). However, building a well-defined theme before producing stories with a strategic aim is essential. Fog et al. (2010) believe that an ideological or moral assertion that serves as the main topic of the entire story is known as the story's central message or premise. An audience can more easily absorb and internalize a moral or lesson when it is successfully communicated to them through a story with a single central theme. Stories containing many messages, however, run the danger of being

"muddled" and confusing for the receiver (Fog et al., 2010, p. 34). As a result, it is imperative to maintain a single message and set priorities appropriately.

Conflict:

It is impossible to exaggerate the significance of conflict in the narrative. According to Fog et al. (2010), a story is likely to be uninteresting and predictable without conflict. This is due to the fact that conflict disturbs the equilibrium that humans intuitively seek in their lives, which forces us to take action to restore it. A good story is consequently propelled by conflict, setting it in motion and generating the tension required to keep the audience interested.

Storytellers use conflict and its resolution to convey their point. Conflict is not always bad; rather, it provides the foundation for expressing our sense of right and wrong. The conflict between good and evil, or between chaos and harmony, is what gives a story its life, with the protagonist frequently setting out to achieve, preserve, or restore harmony (Fog et al., 2010).

While more conflict might make for a more dramatic story, avoiding too much conflict that confuses the reader is crucial. Finding the appropriate balance is crucial for crafting an engaging story since utter anarchy is just as dull as total peace. Fog et al. (2010, p.38) illustrate an additional tool called "The Conflict Barometer" that writers of stories can use to gauge how well their conflicts work.

Characters:

Storytelling heavily relies on the roles and purposes of characters. According to Fog et al. (2010), a problem can only be resolved with interesting characters interacting with one another. Furthermore, every character in traditional fairytales plays a distinct role, and this framework can be found in storytelling customs worldwide. A story's protagonist often works with others to achieve a goal, but they also come up against adversity that stirs up conflict - while the enemy may appear physically or psychologically in many different ways. Fog et al. (2010) argue that the audience must see a small quantity of themselves in the characters and comprehend their motivations for them to be able to relate to them in a story. The same logic can be implemented in brands developing stories around central characters that accelerate the change, for example, CEOs like Steve Jobs with Apple or Elon Musk with Tesla.

Plot:

Once the story's theme, conflict, and cast of characters have been defined, it is crucial to think about how the plot will develop. The order of events is essential to the audience's enjoyment because a story can only be defined as a series of events that occur over a certain period. In

order to keep the audience interested and advance the plot, significant thought must be paid to the event's organization (Fog et al., 2010).

A story often has three distinct parts: a beginning, a middle, and an end (Fog et al., 2010). The story's opening sets the setting, and as the conflict intensifies, it establishes the rules for the rest of the narrative. The struggle intensifies as the hero grows during the middle of the story, leading to a confrontation between the hero and the villain in the climax. The protagonist typically has to take a stand and decide on something that will affect the conclusion.

Fog et al. (2010) note that Hollywood productions usually have happy endings that restore balance. However, just like businesses, not all stories have happy ends, and viewers frequently get a surprise. Fog et al. (2010) further point out that a story's lead is, therefore, very crucial since it will draw the reader in and establish the theme and tone of the piece - just like a brand communicating a "new start" needs to capture the audience to get the "ball rolling".

3.3.3 Storytelling in Business

In business, storytelling is a potent tool for daily communication as well as for strategic branding. This section will examine storytelling in both of these settings and the various uses that businesses can make of it. Strategically speaking, the narrative is crucial for branding since it develops a strong brand idea that appeals to consumers. A brand represents a narrative, and by using a narrative, businesses may appeal to consumers' emotions while expressing their beliefs and mission (Fog et al., 2010).

Fog et al. (2010), for instance, discuss the "will to win" as represented by Nike's core story, while "learning through creative play" is represented by LEGO's core story. He explains that, by examining these tales using his fairytale model, we can observe that they feature strong characters, well-defined conflicts, and all the other components of a successful plot. The emphasis is that all company communication, both internally and internationally, should be guided by a core story that is directly connected to the corporate brand (Fog et al., 2010).

Both on a business and a product level, storytelling is beneficial. Fog et al. (2010) argue that companies must closely monitor their long-term brand strategy and develop compelling core stories that do not compete with the corporate brand for each of their product brands. Furthermore, since consumers are more knowledgeable than ever before, businesses cannot hide behind corporate walls. They may exchange and discuss this knowledge in a public setting, which promotes a more open market. They have access to information via newspapers, television, and the Internet. Companies must therefore offer brands that assist customers in navigating and making decisions in the future marketplace so that consumers can choose brands that go beyond simple needs and desires.

As a general rule of thumb, storytelling may be incredibly successful for operational communication in addition to its strategic significance. For instance, anecdotes can be used to

support arguments or convey a message in a particular situation. The four essential components of storytelling presented earlier may be found in even the tiniest anecdote, making it a powerful method of word-of-mouth dissemination (Fog et al., 2010).

Adopting a comprehensive strategy and integrating techniques to support the main brand message is the best way to use storytelling as a branding tool (Fog et al., 2010). Companies can utilize storytelling as an effective internal and external communication technique in various contexts. Additionally, the concept of creating "signature stories" presented by Urde (2021) - where everyone lives the story, creates a narrative for future brand identity creation. Furthermore, when done correctly, this implementation functions as an activation model from the inside out and generates traction of the spoken story.

In conclusion, storytelling is an effective technique that businesses may utilize for both operational communication and strategic branding. Companies may develop a brand that aids consumers in navigating and making decisions in the future marketplace by developing a compelling core story that connects with consumers and using storytelling as a dynamic communication tool.

4 Empirical Results

The following section will be divided into two main parts. The first part functions as a guiding element, presenting the three chosen companies and their latest brand activity. This is implemented to give the reader a more comprehensive overview of the cases. Moreover, a summary, followed by company analysis through the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix, will be illustrated. The second part functions as a presentation of the research, providing the empirical findings and results. As discussed in the methodology chapter, these are arranged in a three-piece formation to present the data holistically.

4.1 Company Profiles

4.1.1 Absolut

With his self-developed, revolutionary distillation process, entailing a single continuous distillation process that results in a higher quality and smooth vodka, inventor and entrepreneur L.O. Smith 1879 introduced his vodka to the Swedish market. He named his vodka “Absolut Rent Brännvin”, which translates to “Absolutely Pure Vodka” (The Absolut Company, n.d.).

In the early stages of the 20th century, the Swedish Royal Court took Absolut as its official supplier, and the vodka was to start exporting internationally. Although with its early taste of success, it took Absolut a couple of years before reaching success on a global scale. In 1979, 100 years after its first introduction, the brand concluded that it needed a rebrand and took help from the advertisement agency TBWA. After deliberations, alterations, and hard work - it resulted in the now infamous “Absolut Perfection” campaign. Featuring eye-catching print ads, it bridged itself into art with collaborations with artists like Andy Warhol and Keith Haring (The Absolut Company, n.d). The campaign proved to be a huge success, and it turned Absolut from a small-scale brand operating from Southern Sweden into one of the best-recognized brands on the world stage.

Still using its original receipt, created by L.O. Smith, the brand is still produced out of Åhus. However, the brand is now owned by the French giant Pernod Ricard, with a more extensive product range from its more premium-oriented “Absolut Elyx” to flavored vodkas like “Absolut Pear”.

Table 2: Corporate Brand Identity Matrix - Absolut

<p>VALURE PROPOSITION</p> <p><i>Premium vodka</i></p> <p><i>High quality</i></p>	<p>RELATIONSHIPS</p> <p><i>Trust</i></p> <p><i>Friendliness</i></p>	<p>POSITION</p> <p><i>Premium spirit</i></p> <p><i>Innovation and quality</i></p> <p><i>Champions of inclusivity</i></p>
<p>EXPRESSION</p> <p><i>Apothecary bottle</i></p> <p><i>Creative advertisement</i></p> <p><i>Art</i></p>	<p>BRAND CORE</p> <p><i>Creative</i></p> <p><i>Innovative</i></p> <p><i>Responsible</i></p>	<p>PERSONALITY</p> <p><i>Open</i></p> <p><i>Progressive</i></p>
<p>MISSION AND VISION</p> <p><i>Dynamic, inclusive industry leader</i></p> <p><i>Bring people together</i></p>	<p>CULTURE</p> <p><i>Inclusive</i></p> <p><i>Inspiring</i></p> <p><i>Dynamic</i></p>	<p>COMPETENCES</p> <p><i>Brand and marketing</i></p> <p><i>Storytelling</i></p> <p><i>Production</i></p>

Absolut, a world-renowned vodka brand, takes a strategic path that includes its goal, vision, and brand positioning. The aim and vision of the firm focus around being dynamic and inclusive industry leaders who connect people via their brand and experiences. The essential ideals that define their brand identity are creativity, innovation, and accountability. Absolut is a premium spirit brand that emphasizes innovation, quality, and diversity. This is seen by their usage of pride colors in their Instagram logo (The Absolut Company, n.d.; Pernod Ricard, n.d.)

Absolut separates itself from the competition by providing high-quality vodka while being committed to sustainability. Their areas of expertise include branding, marketing, narrative, and the creation of sustainable spirits. Absolut is now ranked sixth among the world's major spirit brands (Pernod Ricard, n.d.)

The brand stresses connection development via trust, social media interaction, and friendliness. They aggressively promote an inclusive atmosphere and serve as role models for responsible drinking, all while retaining a modern attitude.

Absolut's personality is determined by its individual manifestation. The famous apothecary bottle is well recognized and has appeared in several print advertisements. The brand's relationships with prominent artists such as Andy Warhol and Keith Haring demonstrate how art and advertising can coexist smoothly. Absolut's personality is described as open-minded

and progressive, with a long-standing dedication to LGBTQ+ inclusiveness as seen by their advertising and active presence on social media.



Figure 5: Absolut Vodka - Logo (Absolut, n.d)

Archeology – Findings

The interviewee worked for the Absolut Company for seven years in various roles and ended his career there as a very senior director. What he explained was that it was difficult for him to pinpoint standalone pivotal moments, as the work they did was fluid, and changes happened in an “evolutionary” manner. However, we expressed three moments during his seven years that stood out to him in this order.

As explained above, Absolut worked in a more evolutionary manner in its brand building. Absolut was keen on keeping their identity intact while always trying to evolve. The former director describes that creativity and continuity in the brand building are two of the key drivers of their strong brand:

“I mean, the strength of all strong brand is continuity. And I think that is like what, what a lot of the brands out there miss, and that's why they never become strong. They don't have the long-term vision and the long-term strength of having a continuous and more evolutionary approach to the brand building. But that said, I mean, it's always a combination. We talked a lot about continuity and creativity as two forces that fuels the brand. And the continuity comes from identity of course, and expression. And the more you establish that identity, the more creativity you can infuse in the way you work with a brand”

Thus, creativity is one of Absolut's goals when building their brand. Creativity in building the brand drives further creativity as the brand's strength increases. There is a constant loop of appreciation in the creative field while continuously working to strengthen the brand in order to keep feeding the loop.

“I mean, you can start playing around with your bottle shape, for example, when that's established you can do all kind of creative stuff with it because it's such a well-known symbol for people, et cetera.”

However, as mentioned above, the former director managed to identify three moments during his time at Absolut that furthered the business.

Geographical Expansion

“There was a lot about geographical expansion during my time there. So that was one of the bigger movements from a brand. We were really strong in the US market and what we did is that we utilized that financial position that we got from being a leader in the US market to fuel growth and mainly Latin America.”

Although not seeming like a revolutionary business decision to expand into new markets, the move further reinforced their internal business philosophy. Absolut works with a global brand plan, with extreme levels of freedom in regards to localization. By entering the Latin American market, it furthered the opportunity to reach the consumers on a cultural level, and not just on a shallow, “advertisement” level. It allowed for a back-and-forth between the actors on the local markets and the global HQ.

“(I mean,) it's a very a strong managed brand from a central perspective. On one end on the other end, we were also good at creating the freedom within the framework for the local markets to operate. So many of the things, the global campaigns were set globally, but then within the framework of a global campaign, there was also an opportunity to add a local artist, a local flavor to the global campaign.”

This level of freedom was noticeable both on the commercial side, as the business grew in a rapid manner, but it was also noticeable internally. Excitement from local offices, and queries in how to manage the business in new markets were the results due to the rapid growth, and the director described it like this:

“(it) also created a lot of energy for the local teams to work with this brand. Because they felt that they were part of something, a global iconic brand, but at the same time had a lot of opportunity of executing that idea locally in different collaborations and stuff.”

“But there was a lot about the expansion. And also found fact that some countries, as for Spain, we were actually growing too fast. Which is interesting adjacent to be in.. ... what we did is we didn't like maximize our sales growth. We maximize our profitability instead. So we raise the prices until we got the growth trend that was healthy. Because you don't want to be a become brand that is a fat that grows too fast and then it dips.”

“So it was better for us to manage the growth in a way that it felt like a healthy traction every year, and instead racing prices to bring the growth rate down.”

With the successes in Latin America, Absolut had more confidence in their expansion into the Spanish speaking cultures in general. It was seen that vodka was not the beverage of choice in these countries, but the trust into the local markets to handle the communication resulted in the opposite.

However, the expansion did not stop there, as opportunities to grow in a different manner came about.

Line Extension

In order to keep on growing, in a sustainable manner, the brand decided to launch a new product, flavored vodka.

“Then we also moved to a situation where we started to work more with flavors line extensions from Absolut. So we launched a number of flavors during my time there, and it was actually really, really good because it was mainly incremental growth. Because we created almost like a personality around each of the flavors.”

When asked why the decision to move into flavored vodka, which today seems like a normal thing to see when observing the shelves in the spirit stores, he replied:

“The decision behind it, I think it was partly driven by that you felt that you needed to tap into also different usage locations. You wanted to have a broader exposure from purely tactical perspective in retail and in bars. I mean, it helps you a lot if you have a huge slide of products to get the brand impact in all this different situation. It was also about infusing the brand with this innovative spirit to, to drive innovation in the category.”

“actually for the first number of years, it was really innovative. It can seem like super simple idea, but it was very innovative to have flavors in the vodka category at that point of time. So innovation, great thing. More storytelling around the brand, getting tons of PR and, and getting more exposure in our different channels.”

Even though they wanted a sustainable growth curve, Absolut did never take the foot of the pedal when it came to creativity, innovation, and especially attention. With all eyes on them in the world of vodka, Absolut pushed even further, with the launch of a new product line. The city ads.

“And as a consequence of the flavor parts, we wanted to, we felt that we had been very creative around our advertising part. We had been very creative in launching, you different city ads, which was quite insane. If we launched, for example, Absolut Berlin we could get like 30, 40 journalists on this. Coming to our press conference to see our new ads. It's absolutely insane. I mean, that won't happen today, huh? So we managed to create this cultural relevance and, and this, I mean, iconic state, that everyone was super interested to see what the Absolut Berlin ad look like or whatever.”

As the city ads had its media successes, Absolut found a way to give back, and try out a new product line. In 2005, New Orleans were hit by hurricane Katrina, where people died and lost their homes. In order to help where they could, the director said:

“We need to support these people. Let's launch a flavor based on the city, so we created this Absolut New Orleans which was like a pepper infused mango flavor. It was a limited edition and it was the first time we launched a product based on a city. And all the revenues and profits from that launch went to rebuilding the city.”

This got a tremendous amount of impact on the U.S. market, and the brand continued to grow even bigger. By keep on launching limited editioned city flavors, the brand could continue to innovate their products with their now affirmed top-level creativity, as explained:

“So we launched a number of city flavors over time. That also was another way of using the product of fueling the creativity and also creating very strong local relevance to a brand, all though limited.”

The former director further explained the reasoning and consequences of this, as follows:

“Once again, of taking the creativity down into the local stores, creating events that was a disco bottle, that was some kind of bling bling bottle, or, I mean, trying to infuse the creativity in all the different touch points. And I think that what really makes a creative brow where you have a very, very simple idea, it makes it also very much simpler to be creative around it.”

“That kind of framed creativity, it's very limited, which means that you can actually be more creative because it is a very narrow scope you play with. It actually creates a lot of new ideas of having that focus.. Having one flavor to more flavors and moving into working with product development in a more innovative and creative way.”

“... we had become a much more consumer oriented company”

However, as the brand allowed for local creativity and freedom in its communication and brand building, disconnect started to emerge. The director explained how they intended to solve this problem.

Market Research

“We were becoming like, kind of disconnected on a strategy in terms of a strategy for the brand. And for example, we had the US market that was the most important market for us in the world where we had a full team lot of very senior marketing people working there...

And compared to other countries where we can easily enforce our global direction, the U.S. market was hard as they had much more position power. They were quite outspoken how they wanted to drive the brand locally there. So we actually ended up in a situation where we had quite a big disconnect in the strategy.”

As the global HQ had the focus on addressing cultural relevance, the U.S. team were focused on sales, and their volume target groups. Tension arose, and discussions were held as both parties felt that they were in the right, and the other party in the wrong. The result; a market segmentation research in the U.S. market, with the goal of finding the different consumer segments, drinking behavior, where value resides, and where volume resides within the different segments.

“So doing this project together was an essential part of aligning ourselves on a strategic direction because when we finalized that, we concluded that we were both wrong. So. We found like, say seven or eight different target groups and we found out that we had tried to target a group of people that perhaps were too far away of creating a real strong trickle-down effect on the broader volumes.”

It turned out that both parties were wrong about their focus, and that they were not reaching their full potential. He described the results like this:

“So I mean logically of course, to target the group of people like the flashy influence and when people see them utilizing your product, you get a much more broader reach and impact of your investment. But at the same time, we saw that the target groups they were trying to address, they weren't influencing anyone and they weren't, they weren't that much value, that bonus.”

“There was a lot of volume, a lot of promotionally driven volume. So in terms of profitability, this wouldn't help us. So we find another key group that was kind of in the middle of these two that was still aspirational, but very much connected.”

“People that were out there and influencing others where we could easily then make the case if we increase our brand awareness, consideration, and preference among these target group”

The market research was a success, as they could reach middle ground and move forward together with a common goal. However, the research spawned a new tool for Absolut to utilize for their business. A brand tracking tool:

“We could easily calculate the impact from a business perspective of what we were doing. So after that journey, we kind of, shook hands and we could move on in, in a manner that both drives both the ability to drive a brand attractiveness in terms of some associations and at the same time, deliver better best business result.”

The tool changed the way Absolut worked with their segmentation on a global scale:

“I produced a global segmentation study where we did the same kind of work in all key countries in the world and created a global consumer segmentation for Absolut that was applied everywhere. So that was really helpful in the business planning side and also in the brand tracking, brand health side of things. That was a very important moment.”

All the questions regarding the strength of the brand, such as awareness, consideration, preference, weak spots and value, could be answered:

“And you have all these numbers. You can easily calculate the worth of the mental availability that's out there...”

“That, I mean, and you could also a bit of calculations that I know as I was part of this due diligence process that Pernod Ricard did.”

The former director further describes the example of Latin America, and Brazil in particular which the brand had grown successfully to illustrate how Pernod Ricard viewed the Absolut brand.

“For example, Brazil, where we had managed to build a really, really strong brand. We had enormous awareness and really strong consideration, but it really didn't translate into the equivalence of market shares in sales. There was a gap due as we didn't have a distribution set up that was very good. In Brazil we didn't manage to leverage the brand equity that we had built.”

“Pernod Ricard could look at Brazil and see what a brand you built here, but you can't leverage that equity. And we have our own distribution set up that is super sophisticated in Brazil. They could look at that and then look at, if we could connect this and the equity with our distribution power in that country, you can easily calculate the upside they will get from that.”

With the inability to leverage the brand equity built up throughout the years, Pernod Ricard saw an opportunity to connect their own strengths with the strengths of Absolut. The former director described the situation like this:

“So that's why they justified paying a very high price for the brand. Back in 2008. And I think again, at the time we sold around 100 million liters of vodka a year. So I mean, it, it, if you calculate back to those numbers it's quite astonishing how many people that have the Absolut brand in their minds when you're looking to have a drink or buy a vodka. So essentially, it's that what you pay for.”

In 2008, the Absolut Company was sold to Pernod Ricard for 55 billion SEK, and that was when the former director decided to leave and pursue a new adventure in his career.

Brand Identity and Values

When discussing the brand and its values, the former director described it like this:

“What was defined at Absolut when I started that is it was about three core values; clarity, simplicity, and perfection. And communicated with imagination, sophistication, and witt. That was like the core of everything we worked on. And, and the beauty of this works is that they were really to relate to when you came to product development and design and even staging an event.”

“So it was all about creating the most beautiful products we can do. It was all about making very communication that's very clear and direct and simple. And then infusing that really minimalistic, almost Swedish idea, that simplistic perfection with imagination, sophistication, and witt...”

“I think the imagination and witt was a huge part in creating this creative brand. So you have this Scandinavian foundation, but, but then that creates some kind of continuity and identity and expression. And then you create you add creativity, imagination, and the tune of voice. And with that was very present in especially of advertising at that point of time.”

Thus, clarity, simplicity and perfection in conjunction were the northern star for the Absolut brand. However, the interviewee further emphasized the culture of the brand, and how important and present it was for everyone working there. He expressed that the culture was of upmost importance in the process of building the strong brand Absolut is today, and how much it was valued:

“This absolutely the best company I've ever, ever worked with. It was at that point of time a leadership that valued and really put the emphasis of very strong idea of the strategic direction of a company where we were heading...”

Really clean on setting the context for everyone, but then creating freedom for everyone to operate within that context. So it was a very decentralized way of

working. People got massive responsibilities from day one and they trusted people to perform. And if someone wouldn't succeed in some aspect people were always there to back you up.”

He further expressed how the trust from the leadership contextualized in practice:

“That enabled people to become very, like bold in their decision making, very creative and, It also enabled speed in the company. We executed so many things in such a short time, so few people due to that, it was a really strong empowerment and, and a very strong backup in terms of if some would go wrong and, and that kind of confidence and trustworthiness that enabled innovation, creativity, and also motivation, and drive.”

As described, trust and psychological safety in the workplace enabled the work to align with its core values, and further its potential.

Pivotal moments

Table 3: Pivotal moments - Absolut

Geographical Expansion
As the brand established itself as a giant within the U.S. market, it decided to leverage its financial successes to expand its business into Latin America.
Line Extension
They decided to expand the product line by releasing flavored vodka.
Market Research
Market research within the U.S. (segment and consumer group insight research) which enabled the sale to Pernod Ricard for 55 billion SEK.

4.1.2 Ericsson

Early Years (1876-1900)

A competent instrument builder, Lars Magnus Ericsson founded Ericsson in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1876. Ericsson's initial concentration was on fixing telegraph equipment. Lars Magnus Ericsson's workshop quickly developed a reputation for high-quality repairs, and

demand for his services skyrocketed. This success prompted him to expand his company and produce telegraph equipment (Ericsson, n.d.).

Expansion into Telephony (1900-1950)

Around the turn of the twentieth century, Ericsson entered the developing industry of telephony. The firm began manufacturing telephone equipment, such as phones and switchboards. Ericsson's commitment to innovation and quality fueled its expansion, allowing it to win contracts to build telephone networks in Sweden and other countries. By the 1920s, Ericsson had established itself as a significant maker of telecommunications equipment (Ericsson, n.d.).

Global Expansion and Technological Advancements (1950-1990)

Following WWII, Ericsson began to develop its global reach. The corporation set up subsidiaries and manufacturing plants in other countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and India. This development enabled Ericsson to meet the expanding global demand for telecommunications infrastructure (Ericsson, n.d.).

Ericsson made important technological advances at this time. The business invented and deployed automatic exchanges in the 1950s and 1960s, which replaced manual switchboards and enabled more efficient and dependable telecommunication services. Ericsson's emphasis on R&D continued, resulting in the development of digital switching systems and mobile telephony technology. Ericsson was a key player in the creation of the Nordic Mobile Telephony (NMT) standard in the 1980s. NMT was the world's first commercially accessible analog mobile phone system, laying the groundwork for the first generation of mobile networks (Ericsson, n.d.).

Mobile Revolution and Network Infrastructure (1990-Present)

The 1990s were a watershed moment for Ericsson and the telecom sector. The transition from analog to digital technology resulted in substantial changes. Ericsson became a prominent manufacturer of mobile network infrastructure, such as base stations, switches, and other components. Ericsson was a major participant in the creation and standardization of the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM). GSM emerged as the dominant second-generation (2G) mobile network technology, enabling greater voice quality, higher network capacity, and the introduction of text messaging (SMS) (Ericsson, n.d.).

Ericsson faced issues in the early 2000s when the dot-com bubble burst, and the telecoms market slowed. The corporation launched a complete reorganization exercise to simplify its

operations and focus on its primary business sectors. As a result, Ericsson sold non-core businesses and focused on delivering network infrastructure, services, and software to telecommunications providers. The company has since played a prominent role in the development and implementation of 5G technology in recent years. The business has worked with network operators and industry partners worldwide to build and improve 5G networks, which provide much faster speeds, lower latency, and the ability to connect many devices (Ericsson, n.d.).

Furthermore, Ericsson has been heavily involved in R&D efforts for new technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and artificial intelligence (AI). These initiatives seek to open up new opportunities in fields such as smart cities, driverless cars, and industrial automation (Ericsson, n.d.).

Today, Ericsson is a global telecommunications industry leader, offering a diverse portfolio of equipment and services that allow efficient and dependable communication networks. Through continued research, cooperation, and technical improvements, the firm continues to drive innovation and define the future of telecommunications.



Figure 6: Ericsson - Logo (Ericsson a, n.d.)

Sony Ericsson

Sony purchased Ericsson's interest in 2012, transforming it into a wholly-owned subsidiary, resulting in its rebranding as Sony Mobile (Communications). Under the new brand, Sony Mobile concentrated on producing revolutionary Xperia smartphones that featured Sony's innovations, such as superior camera sensors, high-resolution screens, and water-resistant designs. However, in the highly competitive smartphone industry, Sony Mobile experienced rising rivalry, which posed hurdles in sustaining market share and profitability.

Sony Mobile faced dwindling sales despite efforts to reinvigorate the brand, such as the release of flagship Xperia handsets and growth into new product categories like as wearables

and in 2021, Sony announced the integration of its mobile business into the larger Sony Electronics company. This strategy shift signaled a movement toward a more consistent approach to integrating mobile technology with other consumer electronics items.

Archeology – Findings

1993

The mobile phone industry was expanding, and Ericsson together with its competitors Nokia and Motorola controlled the markets as described during the interview:

“up until that time, we still had, together with Nokia and Motorola, I think we know we more or less had 98% of the market, apart from Japan.”

However, the market shares and its success did not align with the internal financial allocations of the budgets. Ericsson was a tech-driven company with focus on radio systems, known as “terminals”, and was not consumer focused. Nokia on the other hand was launching an entirely new consumer division internally, which had a focus on expanding their business. As management saw the potential threats their competition could pose, a decision to focus more on mobile phones was made, and it needed a reason to allocate a larger budget for this endeavor, explained as following:

“in those days we were still, from a budget perspective, we got allocations from head office. Many times it was based on a percentage of sales and such. And we didn't really have a massive brand as a consumer product. It was still almost like an accessory to radio systems”

1994 - 1995

The second pivotal moment was when Ericsson decided to break away the mobile phone business from the parent company to create its subsidiary Ericsson Mobile Communications. This change entailed that there would be single focus on producing consumer products, and they were allocated a larger sum for marketing, and thus pivoting from being the “old self” in terms of their products and their commercialization.

“I think that the budget we had at the, uh, either the first or the second year, was north of, 200 million euros. So we went from more or less, nothing to a lot.”

The interviewee also pointed out that the results of the budget increase were hasty, and efficient from a consumer perception perspective:

“I think that the, the, the general opinion, the public opinion about Ericsson as a company went from being, supplying defense materials and technology to predominantly, being perceived as producing and, and distributing consumer products. It took less than a year, and that was due to all the marketing that we poured into. We used predominantly, product based, product oriented communication”

As a result, from the shifts in both marketing strategy, as well as operational strategy, the business changed. Furthermore, the successes of the newly started company, which was associated but standalone from the giant which is Ericsson, the results reflects the push. From being one business unit to its own company, Ericsson Mobile Communications, can be summarized with two quotes from the interviewee:

“It was more of a, or so we managed to, through marketing, change the perception and when we did that, we went from, as I said, being a small part of the radio systems unit to becoming our own. The profit grew with, I would say a hundred, 200% per year.”

“With a company like Ericsson at that time was about 130 years old, got a new boost from consumer. Products, which they had never had before. And the profits backed it up. It went from being half obscure to being a talk of the town together with Nokia was, you know, fortune 200, fortune 100. It totally revamped the name, the brand from being, strangely obscure, difficult-to-understand technologies that no one really dealt with, to a physical consumer product that everyone had in their pocket.”

However, after riding the high of the successes, the interviewee shared some stories about when the company took a turn for the worst. As a subsidiary of a giant company, there are still co-creation and sharing needed between the two entities. Radio systems (BR) still wanted compatibility for their products and services, which started to cost Ericsson Mobile Communication money. With bad decisions to focus on technologies that were not profitable for the newly found subsidiary, the parent company insisted to focus on the overall business of Ericsson instead of Ericsson Mobile Communication, which was expressed in this way:

“I think it was 16 products on market of which a good 90% were within one technology, and there we had like, you know, four phones perhaps. Then the other eight or 10 phones, we're supporting five other technologies as a combined volume of five, 10%. But as you know, marketing, it is a numbers game. But the thing is that you can't just say, but okay, just because you have 5% of the volume, then you get 5% of the marketing investments. Because after below a certain threshold, you can just as well throw it in the have it bin because it's not going to have any effect.”

Due to bad investments and budget allocation, there a rift between the newly formed subsidiary and the parent company emerged. When the decision to finance the technologies

was questioned, and the interviewee asked what the strategy was, the reply from executive management at parent company Ericsson was:

“That strategy is choice and we've chosen not to choose.”

Thus, there was discrepancies between the vision of the subsidiary, and the goals of the parent company. There was a clash between the two parties as one part wanted to move forward and continue the innovation, whilst one side wanted to stay in the past where it was safe. This led to losses within Ericsson Mobile Communications, and change was needed in order to change the course of the ship.

“There were a lot of technology shifts coming at that time we, we started going into 3G and, there was a lot of things happening and we had a lot of legacy, a lot of legacy product systems cost that was there. I think that they also kind of felt and knew that just taking, making the right decisions in house to kill some of your darlings is not going to happen.”

2001

The third pivotal moment that the interviewee identified was the merger between Ericsson Mobile Communications and the mobile business unit within the Japanese giant Sony. The merger resulted in the new mobile phone company, Sony Ericsson. As mentioned in the quote above, Ericsson Mobile Communication had a lot of legacy and legacy products, so questions arose on how to create a fusion between two large companies from two completely different societal and professional cultures, as explained:

“We had a very difficult time actually to start with seeing how much of the past shall we keep, what of the past, what of the prior brands, both, personas and culture and et cetera, et cetera, shall we keep, and what shall we, you know, create new from scratch, more or less?”

With the difficulties in fusing the two companies and two cultures, with the attempt to launch one brand, Sony Ericsson decided to keep it simple in the launch of their first product on the market. However, this simple strategy proved more difficult than initially imagined, as described below:

“We took a decision to rebrand an existing product with the new Sony Ericsson brand. So we had a little product, I can't recall what it was called, 't something', that first came out as an Ericsson product. And then, we just rebranded it and said Sony Ericsson on it all, and making that credible. It was extremely difficult, however, because we had unfortunately two different types of customers. We had the ones we sold to, and we have the ones that we marketed to.”

However, the brand succeeded, and the new launch was perceived as positive. As mentioned above, there were two cultures and two visions that needed to become one in order to stay afloat. With time comes experience, and the interviewee had that at the time of the merger and the launch of the new brand. With the discussions and forced decision from Ericsson prior of the merger, the interviewee describes the strategy of becoming number one on the market like this:

“We should be number one in imaging, in camera functionalities and everything like that. We should be number one in entertainment. And I think that we said that we should be number one in something else also, I'm not really sure. And, the objective was to become that within two years. It took us nine months. And that was due to the fact that we, we did everything that we didn't do within Ericsson.”

When asked what the results of this decision were, the interviewee took a second and reflected. He explained that the ‘vehicle’ of the strategy would be a new phone, with no antenna, sleek in the colors of black and silver, which was very different from how their phones were constructed in the past. With the modernization of the product, a change occurred:

“The operators loved it for consumers, loved it. All of a sudden we started marketing ourselves not as a tech brand, but as an experience brand.”

There was a shift in the internal perception of the brand, and how they operated it. From a very technical and functional background which Ericsson, the merger resulted in a new perspective of how a mobile phone company could be run. From, now either obvious or obsolete functionalities, to experiences that the mobile phone would enable the consumers. Internal discussion regarding proprietary IP's which Sony held, and how these could be integrated into the mobile phone. CommuniCam and Walkman were the biggest ones of interest, but Sony did not want to let go of them initially. However, after implementing the new camera functionality, the brand finally got access to the Walkman IP, and the interviewee had this to say about it:

“Finally we got the, the rights to use Walkman and we made a yellow Walkman phone, the same phone as we had. We just beefed up the music player playback functionality. Branding on Walkman made it yellow, and sold like hot cakes and we conquered the entertainment side of things. So within nine months to a year, I said we were this company that was, you know, dying a year and a half before or two companies that were more or less dead a year and a half before. We're now the most innovative brand in the world, best imaging brand in the world and, best entertainment brand in the world on a mobile phone perspective.”

However, innovation does not stop. With years of success and innovation within product development and consumer facing initiatives, the ‘backend’ technology started to surface as a headache. Platforms, i.e. the functionalities architecture in which the applications were built

into, started to be burdened with the demands from consumers. Some examples of applications were internet access, music playback and even better imaging. All the major three mobile phone brands had their own, proprietary platform at that time, and with the smartphone started to be developed on these platforms. However, as this was very new, uncertainty arose and keeping it safe was deemed the best option from the executive management:

“I think that, that Nokia, owned a big part of ‘Symbian’ (platform) so they, needed to go down that route, but they, more put their money on Windows Microsoft platform. Ericsson on the other hand, we decided to do both Windows and Symbian. And that was what killed us both was in the middle of that, where we couldn't get, you know enough volumes”

“So instead of betting everything on one horse on something and actually getting the volumes up to have something to bargain with we spread ourselves thin. And 2007, The iPhone came. Yeah. One platform focusing on what they were good at, which was a kickass screen. They built an ecosystem that was proprietary and one of us thought that it was going to die because of the fact it was proprietary. When we were on open platforms, an open source, and they had arrived and we were wrong.”

“And all of a sudden this ‘challenger brand’ (Apple) started, you know, taking hostages left, right, and center.”

“And Samsung has started coming up. Started eating a bit of our lunch, also doing it pretty well. But basically speaking again, a lack of, decision as strategy is choice, but we chose not to choose...”

So we kind of redid the same thing, in my opinion, wrong 10 years before. Yeah. And, there you are.”

Brand Identity and Values

We asked the interviewee to define the brands, in his own opinions. We first asked him to define Ericsson in the beginning, Ericsson Mobile Communication and lastly Sony Ericsson, here is what he said:

“Ericsson in the beginning; innovative, tech driven, and market leader”

“the middle one, it was still tech driven but, uh, the old, it became an old brand, an old brand in thinking it was not innovative anymore. We got stuck in our own opinion about what the consumers wanted. We started, we didn't listen to our consumers and became slow fat cats.”

“and then Sony Ericsson, quick, innovative, selective and, consumer oriented. Cool.”

Pivotal moments

Table 4: Pivotal moments - Ericsson

First 1993
Just prior to his start at the company, 1993, the mobile phone business unit broke away from Business Radio (BR) to its separate Business Terminal (BT).
Second 1994 - 1995
1994 - 1995, business unit BT broke away from Ericsson and became its own company. The new company was named Ericsson Mobile Communications.
Third 2001
The last major pivotal moment during his career at Ericsson (Mobile Communications) was the merger with the Japanese company Sony ‘s mobile phone unit in 2001, creating the new company Sony Ericsson.

4.1.3 Lemminkäinen

History

Lemminkäinen as a company and, more specifically, as a brand is arguably one with Finland - it could be stated that these two have lived in symbiosis and helped each other achieve success for the past 100 years. From identity development through the struggles of the early 1900-hundreds wars to the global expansions in the break of the century - Lemminkäinen has always reflected its core brand identity to fit with the Finnish heritage and the concept of what it means "to be Finnish" (Kivinen, 2021). Furthermore, even the company name "Lemminkäinen" draws inspiration from a Finnish 19th-century work of epic poetry compiled by Elias Lönnrot from Karelian, telling a story about the creation of the earth, describing the controversies and retaliatory voyages between the peoples of the land of Kalevala - where Lemminkäinen was one of the key characters (Laitinen, 2014).

The company's history started when Asfaltti Osakeyhti Lemminkäinen was founded by Kaarlo Oila and a few other builders in July 1910 on Helsinki's Tehtikakatu (Tuuri, 2010).

The brand prospered from organic and fast growth during its first operational years - during this time, the iconic Asfaltti Osakeyhtiö Lemminkäinen logo was also created (Laitinen, 2014).



Figure 7: Asfaltti Osakeyhtiö Lemminkäinen - Logo

Fast forward to 1941, when Finland was at war with the Soviet Union - one of Lemminkäinen's most significant early projects was implemented, i.e., the line-fourth strategically designed to protect a key area on Finnish territory (Kivinen, 2021). This project further strengthened Lemminkäinen's brand and the Finnish society's connection to the company.

Moving to the beginning of the 1970s, when Lemminkäinen started its expansion outside of Finland, later in 1990, becoming one of the largest construction brands in the Baltics and Scandinavian (Kivinen, 2021). This era also included the purchase of Oy Alfred A. Palmberg Ab in 1975 - further strengthening the brand and now becoming a well-known name internationally (Kivinen, 2021).

Up until the rebranding of Lemminkäinen just before the financial crises in 2007 - 08 - the company was well-known for its core values, where accountability was at the core, accompanied by passion, and the general perspective was "trust" among various stakeholders (Kivinen, 2021). Nevertheless, the rebranding, also described as "the downfall of Lemminkäinen" in the book by Kivinen (2021), was a critical turning point for the brand. The change imposed a strategic change and restructuring of the Lemminkäinen Group, consisting of hundreds of smaller daughter companies, to one giant unity. According to the author, this was a major mistake and the underlying reason for poor financial results, lack of trust, and finally, acquisition by YIT Group in 2017.

Where Are They Now?

For the purpose of this study, only Lemminkäinen will be utilized and described in the context of the following sections. However, as mentioned in the previous section, YIT purchased Lemminkäinen in 2017 up to 100% - this also meant the end of the brand Lemminkäinen. It should be noted that even though Lemminkäinen "died", traces of its brand identity can be found within YIT Group - for example, "passion" was one of YIT's core values in 2022, and the "accountability" aspect is also communicated in their annual reviews (YTI, 2022). In this sense, Lemminkäinen is only dead in the flesh, but the spirit lives on within the new organization.

Archeology – Findings

The interviewee's career with Lemminkäinen Oyj was somewhat unusual, at least in today's context - however, in a positive manner. The interviewee stated his journey in Lemminkäinen after completing his bachelor's degree in 1976 and was there until the very end of his career in 2015 - completing his Master's for and alongside working with the company. He moved up the corporate ladder during his career, positioning himself in various C-level roles - allowing him to see the strategic development of the brand from multiple perspectives. What he explained was that it was difficult for him to pinpoint standalone pivotal moments, as everything was so connected. However, three moments were expressed during the 39 years that stood out to him in this order.

Internationalization

Although Lemminkäinen was already working across borders in neighboring countries to Finland, like Russia, the Baltics, Sweden, etc., the brand clearly wanted to grow. During the 1980s, there was a big "boom" going on inside Finnish firms to become international and aggressively expand, especially in the more prominent companies, and to really make a mark for Finland globally. Lemminkäinen was no exception in this conquest! - the interviewee commented:

"There was a willingness to grow and a willingness to take risks!"

"Lemminkäinen started to expand its activities in the late 70s and early 80s, precisely with the expansions of Iraq and Africa... There was really a feeling that we started conquering the world with others!"

Furthermore, this international expansion allowed Lemminkäinen to show and communicate their brand and the "Lemminkäinen way" to others - to show who we are, how we do business, and how the "family mindset" is key in everything. The interviewee noted:

"I would say that becoming international added a feather to our hat as a big brand, and we started to really feel like a large-scale enterprise."

"Yes, thinking back, this was truly a big moment for the company and the brand in general - in the perspective of becoming international."

This moment in Lemminkäinen's history also allowed them to "open their eyes" and start creating relationships with other companies, states, and leaders worldwide. The interviewee stated:

"We wanted to be big, we wanted to be international, and it also brought experts from all over the world who set the tone for the new era."

This expansion took Lemminkäinen to the global market in a timespan of a couple of years, more precisely late 70 to early 80s.

Although the radical growth and a totally new audience, the company kept its brand identity the same. The reasoning behind this was the ideology of portraying something new to external markets, i.e., the "Lemminkäinen way" - which is so intact with values and beliefs from Finnish culture that it was decided to keep unchanged. The interviewee noted, with a common slogan within the company:

"Lemminkäinen - keeps the wheels turning!"

Growth Leadership

According to the interviewee for Lemminkäinen, another pivotal moment was the beginning of the 90s. Lemminkäinen appointed a new CEO in 1990, who brought Lemminkäinen to new dimensions, both through growth and awareness of the public audience. The interviewee explained that the new CEO created and implemented a new strategic vision for the brand without hurting or compromising the brand. He stated:

"A strategic mandate from the board that every industry either becomes number one or number two - which started the period of expansion for Lemminkäinen."

This admirable task was made even more challenging through the economic depression that harmed the whole nation, especially the organizations. The interviewee commented:

"At this time, many big companies also collapsed, and so did almost YIT, but it didn't collapse."

However, Lemminkäinen took this as an opportunity to grow, changing the organization's whole mentality and leading them to success. Looking back at this era, the interviewee reflected:

"Drastic cuts "down to the bone" - now it's a question of being or losing."

"Saving and not wasting was at the core of the whole company - the mentality of the entire organization changed! ...this created a spirit of unity and belief that we can do it!"

"The whole group was very aware of it, and things were discussed as they were, both internally and externally."

This resulted in a new "spirit" inside the company, and a community was born! The interviewee explained that everyone inside the company felt a special kind of pride, and job ownership became a part of the culture. He commented:

"Lemminkäises blew into one coal!"

"Recession – and surviving it!"

"Created a new heritage layer for the brand, so-called unique DNA which strengthened the whole organization."

This organizational change within the brand played a huge role in the years to come for Lemminkäinen.

Strategy Change

The following pivotal moment will illustrate a negative timespan in Lemminkäinen's history, resulting in a forced sale to YIT Group in 2017. It is essential to mention that Lemminkäinen Brand is a result of over 100 years of heritage and development, and the downfall significantly impacted the industry overall. There was a disappointment to be noted when the interviewee commented:

"I retired in 2015 and had time to watch through this disaster."

"It was a complete wreck - for the company and the brand."

The interviewee explained that the underlying factor behind this "disaster" and culture disruption was directly linked to the board and C-level obsolescence, leading to strategic "renovation". He pointed out:

"The big turning point was the aging of the management, i.e., all the big and famous managers at the time were retiring - some of whom also, unfortunately, died at this time... and there was no clear successor for Lemminkäinen."

Interestingly enough, in 2007, when this change occurred - Lemminkäinen was on a winning streak, and no real strategic change was needed. However, the interviewee stated:

"It was interesting that Lemminkäinen pulled all-time highs exactly at this time, 2007, before the financial crisis... and still the board got a new leader who wanted to reform the entire organization".

The completely new board with a newly appointed CEO decided that change was needed, and the brand needed to illustrate this new era. The interviewee explained:

"In the new manager's opinion, the old way of doing business was not modern, and he almost despised the old way, which consisted of managing thousands of small sites and operators in units where there is little plus and little minus, but large-scale profit."

"A consulting report was commissioned, which revealed that if you (Lemminkäinen) do not double up on everything and make a complete change in strategy, the company will not survive... and at the same time, the financial crisis began."

"The new management wanted to centralize everything."

"Now we're getting big and becoming like Skanska."

This was a selfish and naive change for Lemminkäinen and was only made possible with the "new people" that just had been appointed. The interviewee commented:

"The new manager's inner circle consisted of famous people in Finland who had succeeded in business life, and that's what he wanted too - he also wanted to get a new feather on his hat... you have to understand that we are all human, after all - but this change in thinking led to the path of destruction."

Moreover, when thinking back to this time, he also stated:

"The board was staffed by the chairman's yes men"

"Lemminkäinen has gotten used to building the organization organically with hard work and little by little, and thereby making their empire - but the new board decided that the whole thing will be swept away and this kind of artificial reform will be made."

"He (CEO) wanted to remove the whole old world and change it - just by illustrating a new image... a bit like removing an old brain and replacing it with a new one, taken from consultants... but it doesn't work like that, does it? I knew from the beginning that if the culture of the brand was touched, especially when it was a family business from the ground up, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to change it."

This change led to huge losses for Lemminkäinen, and the brand's core identity was neglected - resulting in the forced sale in 2017 to YIT Group. Moreover, what had been a pillar of

Finnish construction and a family-oriented brand now became a scattered part of a huge enterprise.

Brand Identity and Values

Both Lemminkäinen's brand identity and values were discussed on several occasions throughout the interview. However, to contextualize the comments and lift up the most relevant aspects, the interviewee stated:

“Skill, Stability, Professionalism, and Accountability – where the core pillars for Lemminkäinen”

“These four aspects were not forced, but rather, noticed – through hard work and reputation”

“Lemminkäinen, was definitely a reputation brand”

The interviewee goes then on by connecting these values to the “family” aspect that Lemminkäinen represented.

“The brand is over 100 years old, and to get so far you really need all stakeholders trust”

“...the family feeling was key in everything”

In a broader context, Lemminkäinen showcased a brand built from accountability and family-orientation, which reflected over everything in and outside of the brand. Lemminkäinen's values supported the identity, and the identity the values – functioning as a “well-oiled machine”.

Pivotal moments

Table 5: Pivotal moments - Lemminkäinen

<p>Internationalization</p> <p>Strong internationalization in the late 1970s to early 1980s, establishing the brand on a global level. Moreover, internal mindset changes across the whole organization, accompanied by the feeling of large-scale enterprise validation.</p>
<p>Growth Leadership</p> <p>CEO change in 1990 and the strategic implementation of cost-efficiency and growth focus across the whole organization. This moment was accompanied by the economic depression - negatively affecting Finnish entrepreneurship and causing bankruptcies on a large scale. Lemminkäinen saw this as an opportunity and flourished.</p>
<p>Strategy Change</p> <p>The "death" of Lemminkäinen Oyj - caused by the board and C-level obsolescence, leading to strategic "renovation". This moment forced the company to make fast decisions, which unfortunately led to changes in the core of its brand in 2007 - driving Lemminkäinen to the edge of bankruptcy and finally acquisition by YIT Oyj in 2017.</p>

5 Analysis

In this chapter, we look at significant moments and artifacts from three companies: Absolut, Ericsson, and Lemminkäinen, and how they impacted their brand journeys. These crucial events and artifacts provide vital insights into Absolut, Ericsson, and Lemminkäinen's brand creation experiences, demonstrating the significance of strategic decision-making, innovation, culture, and alignment in establishing great brands. We will then identify and analyze the underlying artifacts, as described in the methodology section of the thesis. Finally, we validate the concept of Archaeological Brand Identity by finishing the chapter with a detailed discussion of the framework.

5.1 Case by Case Analysis

5.1.1 Absolut

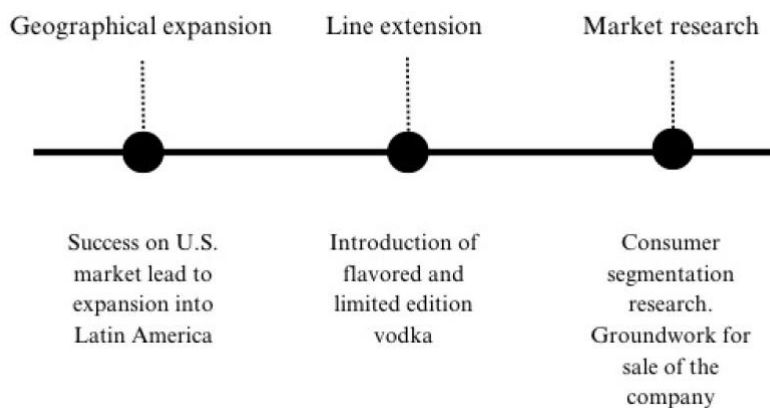


Figure 8: Absolut – Timeline

Pivotal Moment 1: Geographical Extension

As Absolut was growing in the U.S. market, the eyes were set on entering the Latin American market on the back of the previous success. As a global brand with a global brand plan, Absolut works in an alternative fashion as they are very decentralized and allow for great

localization of their marketing and branding activities, with the goal of building a culturally relevant brand.

Artifact 1 – “Local trust”

As described in the previous section, Absolut works with a global campaign plan, but instill a lot of trust into the local offices for localization activities. There is no question that there is an abundance of competence within the Absolut Company, as they managed to become one of the largest spirits brands in the world. Based on the discussion with the former director, the culture of the brand seems to empower the competence of the employees, which furthers the creative expression. This in turn fosters a positive relationship with all relevant stakeholders. As the communication is local, by locals, the trust “from global” furthermore fosters cultural relevance for the local markets, and changes the perception of vodka in Latin America, in this case. This all connects to the “Interaction Path” (Urde, 2021), which determines how values are engaged with both internal and external stakeholders.

Furthermore, there is a narrative trickle-down effect within the geographical expansion of Absolut. The narrative from HQ is communicated with the intention of enabling and empowering the staff in the local offices. By not limiting the creative boundaries for the local offices, Absolut “walk the talk” with their internal encouragement, which translates into local, external, stories which continuously builds the strength of the brand.

Artifact 2 – “Migration”

There were signs that of potential prosperity in the Latin American markets after the abundance of success Absolut had on the American market. Due to the local trust, discussed above, the American offices managed to leverage the strength of the brand into sales volumes, which would in turn leverage the expansion in itself. This is not an easy task, and it requires strong leadership from an HQ perspective, as focus on “relocation” needs to be honed. Thus, the successes in the U.S. snowballed into the migration into the Latin Americas.

What this signals is that with strong leadership, an expansive internal culture and the means of translating the values proposition and its mission and vision, into a new position in a new market is possible. Think of the Nordic settlers, the Vikings, in the 1000th century when migrating over the North Sea into the then scattered England. With aim, purpose and an abundance of farming competences, along with ferocity, the Viking settlers were successful in creating a satellite state. In a similar fashion, although way less violent, Absolut honed in on their core competences, their value proposition, which entails the “Strategy path” (Urde, 2021), and managed to succeed in their market migration.

Artifact 3 – “Growing pains”

As the Absolut brand expanded and grew even bigger, they experienced some initial problems in the Spanish market, as stated in the previous section. They experienced too much growth in terms of volume, which did not corresponded with the image Absolut wanted. As they were market leaders within the U.S., their position was important to protect. With the position of a strong, market leading, brand, Absolut did not want to appear as “fat”, which would threaten their premium position. By increasing the prices, they worked towards their goal of sustainable growth, which are signals of their internal competences of working the market and protecting their value proposition. These are both elements of the “Strategy path” (Urde, 2021), and they are aligned throughout this pivotal moment. By adapting the short-term strategy in order to protect the brand and its position in the long-run, it shows great flexibility.

Pivotal Moment 2: Line Extension

As the Absolut brand was growing in a rapid manner, the decision of evolving the product line was set in action. By releasing flavored and city inspired vodka, the growth of the brand was more sustainable. This resulted in exposure in new forums, as well as coming one step closer to the cultural relevance they seek.

Artifact 1 - “Movement”

We see signs of learning, as Absolut needed a way to keep growing and building the brand, in a sustainable way. The result, as described in the previous section, was moving into a new line of products. By extending the core business into a new variation of the product, the brand could continue with their core approach of expression and creativity. It allowed for a different exposure in bars and on retail shelves, but also in the minds of the consumers. By furthering the narrative behind the brand, as someone that can be “you” due to the personality-attachments Absolut placed on the different flavors. It is revealing how the personality of the corporate brand stays intact, whilst attaching personalities to the product brands in order to connect with consumers on a deeper level. This was a shift from the brand to its consumers. By staying authentic in their communication and expression, whilst focusing on “personalizing” the products for their consumers, we see a clear and intact “Character path” (Urde, 2021). Hence, by becoming more consumer oriented, Absolut strengthened their own character, and in turn the brand as a whole. The artifact, movement, has thus a double meaning in the way they moved into a new line of products as well as in their orientation as a brand.

Artifact 2 - “Innovation”

In line with the previous artifact, a pattern starts to emerge. It seems like learning, and knowledge acquisition never stops within Absolut, as they are constantly seeking for methods of growing and expanding the limits of the business. Innovation is something that was recurring during the interview. This furthermore falls in line with how Absolut works with their brand building. By continuously trying to evolve, in all aspects of the brand, fosters an innovation-oriented workforce, which is evident with their line extensions and surrounding branding. By creating focused advertisements, personalities and nurturing the internal creativity, we can identify two CBIM-paths, ‘competition’ and ‘character’. As they are expanding their value proposition and internal competences, in all facets regarding product development and brand building activities, Absolut have strengthened their “Competition path”. Furthermore, this fuels their expression and personality elements within CBIM, which results in a solid “Character path”. Thus, we see that the ‘artifact innovation’ is solidifying their brand identity through the brand core.

Artifact 3 - “Attention”

With the release of the city-themed bottles, the media ate it up and attention were on Absolut once again. This also falls in line with the two previous artifacts, as the constant movement in a forward and expansive direction is apparent. As mentioned by the interviewee, the launch of the city ads and then the city inspired limited edition flavors opened up opportunities for more storytelling. The “plotline” of the New Orleans launch is evident, with the goal of positioning themselves as the hero of the story. By acknowledging the horrific scenes after hurricane Katrina, the brand positioned themselves as the hero by donating all revenue to rebuild the city. As Fog et al. (2010) describes storytelling, the brand, Absolut, drew in the press in order to capture the audience and launched their limited editioned bottles. Thus, by using storytelling and product innovation, they received the required attention to lay the groundwork for success of the new product line, whilst keeping the growth curve sustainable. As the brand are expanding their value proposition and forums for expression, Absolut is very externally focused.

Pivotal Moment 3: U.S Market Research

As the brand was growing huge in the U.S., differences between how to build the brand arose between global HQ and the U.S. offices. Disconnect and disagreements on how to grow the brand arose, which resulted in internal tension between the two parties. A market research was conducted in an attempt to reach a middle ground and release the tension built up within the management of the brand.

Artifact 1 - “Challengers”

As power dynamics are shifted and leadership is challenged, tension will arise. We could see signs of tension between HQ and the American offices in the way business was conducted. As discussed previously, there has been a lot of trust for the local offices, whilst respecting the wishes of HQ throughout. This was the first sign of internal clashing, which have the potential consequences of “dissonance” in terms of expression, personality, culture, position, and the brand core itself. As described by Urde (2013), all elements within the CBIM have to be solid and cohesive in order to have a strong brand identity. When the challenger, the U.S. offices which have previously been the driving force of the geographical extension into Latin America, starts to question the decisions and direction of HQ, all the CBIM-paths starts shaking. In regards to storytelling, there are two perspectives on the story. One party views the other as the villain and themselves as the hero, whilst the other party views the situation as reversed. Thus, when the core is viewed differently, internal and external communication will differ greatly, which in turn results in confused employees and consumers. The internal tension is beneficial for no one, and it needs to be resolved in a rapid manner.

Artifact 2 – “Torch”

Although tension, they were solution oriented, and a torch in the darkness appeared to guide them back on track. Thus in order to realign the internal elements within the CBIM, and regaining the solid foundation of their brand core (Urde, 2013), the market research was conducted. This acted like the torch, a multifaceted object which can light up the dark, lead the people home, but also act as a beacon. By conducting the market research, or lighting the torch, Absolut managed to also find itself in a new position in the U.S. market, which proved fruitful as they found “their people”.

By following the torch, Absolut managed to salvage the disconnect between the offices and between expression, personality, culture, position and its core. However, the light does not only illuminate the path before you, it can also attract others.

Artifact 3 – “Exit”

With an intact brand core after a shaky period of ups and internal turmoil, the torch got the attention of Pernod Ricard. As the expansion into Latin America proved fruitful in terms of the strength of the Absolut brand, it also pointed out some of the lacking aspects within the competence element. Absolut did not have the infrastructure to distribute in the most efficient manner, Pernod Ricard’s interest peaked. As a strongly positioned brand with clear expression and culture, Absolut was not able to fully reach their potential, and Pernod Ricard noticed this. With the distribution competences, Pernod Ricard managed to fill the competence gap

which in theory should further strengthen the brand. Thus, Pernod Ricard acquired Absolut in 2008, and have then grown into the sixth biggest spirits brands in the world, whilst still staying true to their values and brand identity.

5.1.2 Ericsson

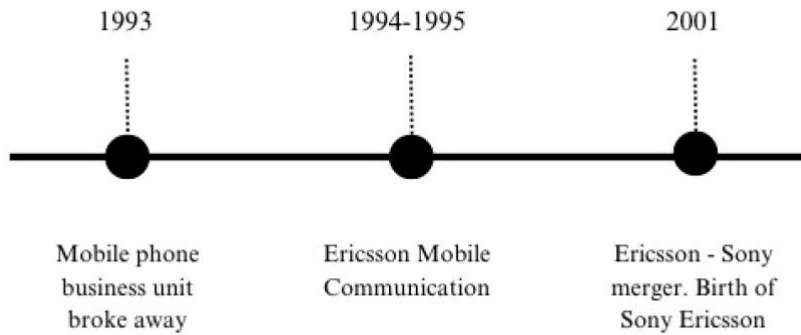


Figure 9: Ericsson – Timeline

Pivotal Moment 1: Breaking free from business unit ‘Business Radio’

Artifact 1 – “Trident”

At the time Ericsson, Nokia and Motorola controlled the market with a combined 98% of market shares divided among them. Since the mobile phone market was still a virgin market, consumer who dared venturing into the new technology gravitated towards any of the big three, which created competition amongst the “trident” companies. Thus in order to become triumphant within the trident, internal and consumer focus was necessary. As they all shared a strong position in the market, compared to the other 2%, an edge was necessary, and Nokia were the first movers into a more consumer oriented business division. Ericsson thus decided to focus on their value proposition by switching business units, and thus new internal competences came about, signaling a shift in the ‘Competition path’ (Urde, 2021) towards a more sustainable and strong position amongst the three. This aligned with their long-term strategy, as their goal was to innovate and claim the leading position within the mobile phone market, signaling a strong ‘Strategy path’ (Urde, 2021).

Artifact 2 - “Expansion”

By launching an internal expansion mission, and moving into a newly formed business unit, a new sense of freedom arose. The new business unit found riches with their expansion, as head office allocated more funds into the expansion of the brand, making it more consumer oriented and not seen as an accessory to radio systems. Thus, the mobile phone unit changed their positioning internally on the basis on their goal of achieving market leading positioning. This signals that, once again, the ‘Strategy path’ (Urde, 2021) was being considered in the changes, and needed aligning.

Artifact 3 - “Migration”

And thus the alignment came to fruition. With the knowledge of the fact that the mobile phone industry was growing and the market was expanding, Ericsson decided that the mobile phone unit needed to migrate and find a new home. This new home would soon to be known as ‘Ericsson Mobile Communications’, the newly founded daughter company, which was a purely strategic decision in order to focus on gaining market shares and attracting the right people to drive innovation and expansion.

Pivotal Moment 2: Birth of Ericsson Mobile Communications

Artifact 1 – “Shedding”

The newly found company, a breath of fresh air, kickstarted an innovation rampage. The brand changed itself from being one small part of a huge organization to its own entity. As more marketing funds were allocated for the newly founded company, the brand building process commenced. As a result of the brand building activities, the company’s profits went up 100-200% per year. The internal branding work is reflected as more competence joined the team, and the external branding is apparent in how the consumers perceived the brand compared to its “predecessor”.

Artifact 2 - “Big brother”

However, the successes of the brand up until that point, Big Brother, Ericsson were still supervising little brother Ericsson Mobile Communications. The discrepancies in terms of vision and strategy were apparent as Big Brother wanted to keep producing and commercializing old products that were outside the scope of little brother. The ‘Strategy path’ (Urde, 2021) was damaged, which damages the strength of the entire brand identity. Internal conflicts surrounding the vision of Ericsson Mobile Communication shook the core, which in

turn forced a shift in positioning in order to fit the bill. In situations like this, tension is unavoidable. It puts pressure on the company culture and relationships within the family. Thus, the 'Interaction path' (Urde, 2021) is damaged, which once again damages the core.

Pivotal Moment 3: Sony Ericsson

Artifact 1 - "Inter-mingling"

Culture is important for all organizations to fully reach their potential as it lays the foundation for attracting the right people. With a well-working internal culture it will allow for innovation, risk-taking and creativity. As mentioned by the former Ericsson director, matching and creating one culture based on two completely different cultures is a challenge. Japanese and Swedish culture differs a lot, not only in a working environment, but also in a societal environment. However, as culture is one of the foundation elements within the CBIM, it is important to continuously work and align the cultural aspect within an organization. Relationships are tied with culture within the CBIM, as it acts as the middle ground for all interaction within an organization. However as expressed by the director, relations, both internal and external, were deemed as positive. New employees and directors were integrated into the new organization, which had a positive outcome based on the data. This resulted in the integration of Sony's proprietary technologies into the mobile phones. Vendors and distributors loved the new products pushed by Sony Ericsson, which in turn resulted in a positive relationship between the brand and its consumers. Thus, we can conclude that the 'Interaction path' (Urde, 2021) was strong.

Artifact 2 - "Eyes on the prize"

The mission of becoming number one in terms of entertainment and functionalities within the mobile phone market was the path of achieving a market leading position. In order to strengthen the 'Strategy path' (Urde, 2021), Sony Ericsson decided to focus on becoming number one in imaging, having the best camera and other entertainment functionalities. Further down the line, Sony Ericsson became the most innovative, best imaging and entertainment brand in the world in a mobile phone perspective. This signals that their strategy was strong and relevant for their goals and wishes of positioning.

Artifact 3 - "Integration"

Ericsson expanded the idea of what a mobile phone should be. By integrating CommuniCam and Walkman into the mobile phones, the brand expanded their value proposition. This was made possible by the new team that was created from the two companies. Sony had a great

library of proprietary technologies, but struggled with commercializing them and in turn make it consumer friendly. Ericsson on the other hand had the experience of producing consumer oriented products, and had a track-record of building a consumer brand. By combining the two sets of competences, Sony Ericsson managed to create an entertainment focused consumer product which the consumer could have in their pocket. This placed the brand in a new position in the mind of the consumers and its competitors. We can thus conclude that by extending the value proposition and combining the internal competences, the ‘Competition path’ (Urde, 2021) was strong and solid.

5.1.3 Lemminkäinen

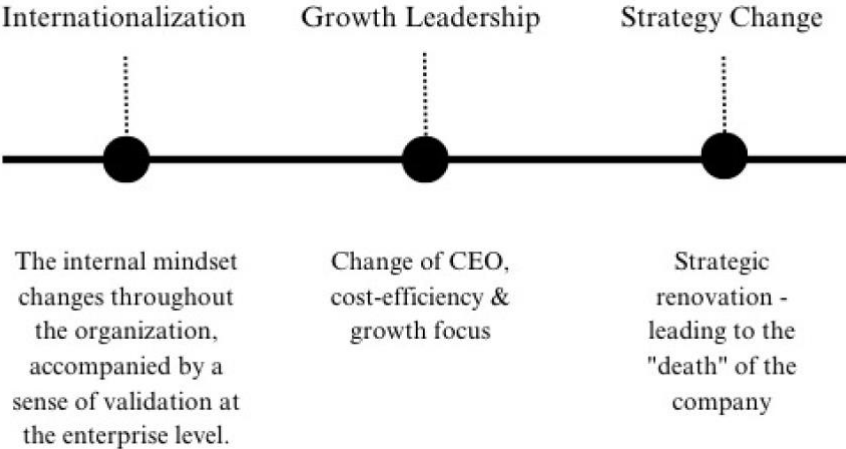


Figure 10: Lemminkäinen – Timeline

We can better understand Lemminkäinen's journey, the difficulties they encountered, positive changes, and the significance of these transformative events by examining metaphors arising from the findings. Furthermore, these metaphors offer rich and vivid language that aids in our comprehension of the emotional and symbolic importance of the communicated pivotal moments.

The following breakdown from pivotal moments to artifacts, functioning as metaphors, deepens the narrative's imagery and imagery, allowing us to explore the symbolic and emotional dimensions of Lemminkäinen's journey, transformation, and brand identity.

Pivotal Moment 1: Internationalization

Strong internationalization in the late 1970s to early 1980s, establishing the brand on a global level. Moreover, internal mindset changes across the whole organization, accompanied by the feeling of large-scale enterprise validation.

Artifact 1 - "Feather in our hat"

This metaphor captures the sense of pride and success that Lemminkäinen felt as they went global. Lemminkäinen put a symbolic feather to their hat by developing a global brand, denoting a significant accomplishment and acknowledgment on a grand scale. This metaphor says that the international expansion strengthened Lemminkäinen's reputation and prestige as a major corporation. Furthermore, the expression "feather in our hat" signifies a sense of accomplishment and pride that accompanied Lemminkäinen's globalization. It demonstrates their achievement in establishing themselves globally and displays their desire to become a household name.

Artifact 2 - "Lemminkäinen - keeps the wheels turning!"

By using this metaphor, it is inferred that Lemminkäinen was instrumental in guaranteeing the success and advancement of many projects or activities. It represents the organization's dependability, effectiveness, and commitment to the construction sector. Lemminkäinen suggests that by keeping the wheels turning, they contributed to the growth and development of infrastructure projects, highlighting their significance and effect.

Moreover, this metaphor portrays the brand as a crucial gear in the building industry's machinery - focusing on their dependability, effectiveness, and contribution to the creation and advancement of initiatives. By using this metaphor, it is implied that Lemminkäinen was instrumental in advancing the sector.

Pivotal Moment 2: Growth Leadership

CEO change in 1990 and the strategic implementation of cost-efficiency and growth focus across the whole organization. This moment was accompanied by the economic depression - negatively affecting Finnish entrepreneurship and causing bankruptcies on a large scale. Lemminkäinen saw this as an opportunity and flourished.

Artifact 1 – “Cuts 'down to the bone' - being or losing”

This artifact emphasizes the difficult circumstances that Lemminkäinen encountered during the financial crisis and the ensuing need for cost-cutting measures. The expression "down to the bone" implies that for the business to exist, it had to make considerable cuts and eliminate unnecessary components. The metaphor emphasizes the urgency of the situation and the significance of the choices that had to be made to preserve the company's survival.

The expression further emphasizes the severity of the economic crisis and the survival strategies Lemminkäinen had to employ. It communicates the sense of urgency and the challenging decisions the business had to make to survive. This metaphor highlights the significance of the choices that were taken at that time and the high stakes involved - which also created a sense of unity within the company and strengthened the mindset for future brand development.

Artifact 2 - "Lemminkäises blew into one coal!"

This metaphor signifies the creation of a unified community within Lemminkäinen. The metaphor compares the collective efforts and collaboration of employees to blowing air into a single coal, which generates a stronger and more productive force. It is a famous phrase in the Finnish language and implies that by coming together and working towards a common goal, Lemminkäinen's employees were able to create a cohesive and highly motivated workforce, i.e., team-spirit. This unity fostered a sense of shared purpose and contributed to the company's success during challenging times.

Artifact 3 - "Recession – surviving it!"

By using this metaphor, the economic downturn is shown as a trying circumstance that Lemminkäinen overcame. The phrase "surviving" implies that the company was in danger of going under due to the recession, but Lemminkäinen was able to get through it and come out stronger. This metaphor highlights the grit, adaptability, and strategic judgment that Lemminkäinen showed in navigating the recession and preserving its place within the sector.

The metaphor also presents Lemminkäinen's brand as tough and equipped to face the difficulties of the financial crisis. It highlights their capacity for flexibility, wise judgment, and tenacity under pressure. This allegory illustrates the determination and will of Lemminkäinen as one unity.

Pivotal Moment 3: Strategy Change

The "death" of Lemminkäinen Oyj - caused by the board and C-level obsolescence, leading to strategic "renovation". This moment forced the company to make fast decisions, which unfortunately led to changes in the core of its brand in 2007 - driving Lemminkäinen to the edge of bankruptcy and finally acquisition by YIT Oyj in 2017.

Artifact 1 - "Wreckage"

This metaphor illustrates the severity of the harm and destruction suffered by Lemminkäinen as a result of strategic adjustments and outdated boards. The word "wreck" conjures up images of wreckage, upheaval, and anarchy. It suggests that the business's operations and reputation both suffered significant harm, as did its brand. This metaphor highlights the scope of the difficulties that Lemminkäinen encountered during this time of change. Moreover, the artifact of a "complete wreck" depicts the destructive effect on Lemminkäinen of strategic adjustments and board obsolescence. It implies that the business and its brand underwent severe harm and turbulence throughout that time. This metaphor illustrates the magnitude of the difficulties encountered and the detrimental effects of the changes.

Artifact 2 - "Transplant"

The management's attempt to drastically alter the company's strategy is compared to the act of removing and replacing a brain in this metaphor. It suggests that the change being pursued was sudden, unnatural, and lacked the thorough comprehension and natural development that distinguished Lemminkäinen's prior achievements. The metaphor emphasizes how challenging it is to change the brands' deeply embedded culture and identity and implies that the chosen strategy could not produce the desired results. This further highlights the challenges of altering an established brand identity as well as the possible drawbacks of taking such a bold step.

5.2 Cross-Case Analysis

5.2.1 Differences

1. Industry and Market Context:

The construction business, especially infrastructure and building construction, is the subject of Lemminkäinen's argument. It works in a highly localized and regulated industry, where

regional variables and government contracts frequently impact initiatives. The Absolut case, however, is about the alcoholic beverage business, namely vodka, and it competes in a worldwide market with other spirit brands and caters to a varied consumer base. Furthermore, the Ericsson case concerns the telecommunications business, specifically mobile phones. It competes in a continuously changing and highly competitive worldwide market marked by continual technical advances and shifting customer tastes.

2. Nature of Merger or Acquisition:

Lemminkäinen's expansion has been driven mainly by acquisitions, in which it has bought various smaller construction firms to extend its market presence and skills. The primary goal was to integrate these acquired firms into the current organizational framework. Pernod Ricard bought Absolut Vodka and incorporated it into its portfolio of alcoholic beverage brands in the instance of Absolut. The acquisition sought to capitalize on Absolut's brand value and global presence. In the Ericsson case, two corporations, Sony and Ericsson, merged to establish Sony Ericsson. This merger entailed integrating both firms' resources, skills, and technology to form a new company in the mobile phone market.

3. Cultural Integration Challenges:

The cultural integration issues that Lemminkäinen encountered were based on matching the acquired enterprises' working methods, beliefs, and conventions with the existing organizational culture. The primary goal was to establish a united culture inside the building organization. As for Absolut, there is no mention of cultural integration issues in the Absolut case. However, the acquisition wanted to protect Absolut Vodka's brand identity and distinctive qualities, implying the necessity for cultural alignment to ensure brand continuity.

For Ericsson, on the other hand, it involved combining two diverse corporate cultures, the merger of Sony and Ericsson faced considerable cultural integration issues. The goal was to unify both firms' beliefs, customs, and working methods to establish a coherent and united culture inside Sony Ericsson.

5.2.2 Similarities

1. Focus on Integration and Synergy:

Integration and synergy were essential goals of the merger, acquisition, or expansion plan in all three situations. The corporations planned to combine the entities' strengths, resources, and competencies to form a more competitive and innovative organization.

2. Focus on Global Reach:

The instances of Absolut and Ericsson demonstrate the significance of growing worldwide presence as a consequence of a merger or purchase. These firms aspired to build a more

significant international presence by entering new countries, increasing market share, and using the organization's distribution networks and R&D skills.

3. *Co-Creation and Innovation:*

Absolut and Ericsson's experiences highlight the importance of co-creation and innovation as a result of a merger or acquisition. These firms could deliver breakthrough products and services to the market by combining their skills, technology, and resources.

4. *Cultural Integration as a Challenge:*

The Lemminkäinen and Ericsson cases emphasize the cultural integration issues that arise throughout the merger or acquisition process. These problems entailed integrating the entities' beliefs, concepts, and work methods in order to develop a single and coherent organizational culture.

Thus, while the industry backdrop, transaction type, and specific issues addressed differ, the instances of Lemminkäinen, Absolut, and Ericsson have common elements such as integration, global reach, innovation, and cultural alignment. These parallels highlight the significance of these characteristics in successful mergers, acquisitions, and development plans across sectors.

5.3 The Brand Archology Framework

The Brand Archeology Framework, shortened as "BAF", is the main contribution this thesis has provided to the broader society. The framework is implemented to the field of brand management and marketing – but is not limited to this area. It is crucial to note that the framework is first of its kind, and its initial implementation does not fulfill its total potential, i.e., although it was born through brand management research, it can be utilized across multiple fields, for example, architecture – where elements of the past can and should be illustrated in future works. However, as this thesis is within the abovementioned field – the explanation of BAF is explained accordingly.

To fully grasp our framework's idea and potential, we decided to provide two illustrations of the figure, i.e., a simplified version and the actual final version. The tough process behind this was to gradually familiarize the reader with the BAF – so that their understanding of its flexibility and relevance is sufficient and to limit misinterpretations further.

The simplified version of the BAF is illustrated below (Figure 11). The framework is divided into three archeological sections, i.e., preparatory work, excavation, and archeological synopsis – symbolized by an arrow. Moreover, below these three sections lies the actual step-by-step work conducted on the brand, i.e., 1 – defining and analyzing the chosen brand today and further finding a way to conduct the "dig", through interviews, for example, 2 + 3 –

through the "dig" find pivotal moments and further break them down to metaphors, function as artifacts, explaining the past, 4 – gathering the findings from the excavation and determining its relevance for the future. These steps are conducted in the same order as the abovementioned arrow explains.

When these steps are conducted, we argue that elements from the past can be contextualized and brought to the future – and whether they are implemented or not lies in the hand of the authorized persons or organization's evaluation. In all its simplicity, the BAF is a tool for idea creation – bringing the past to the future.

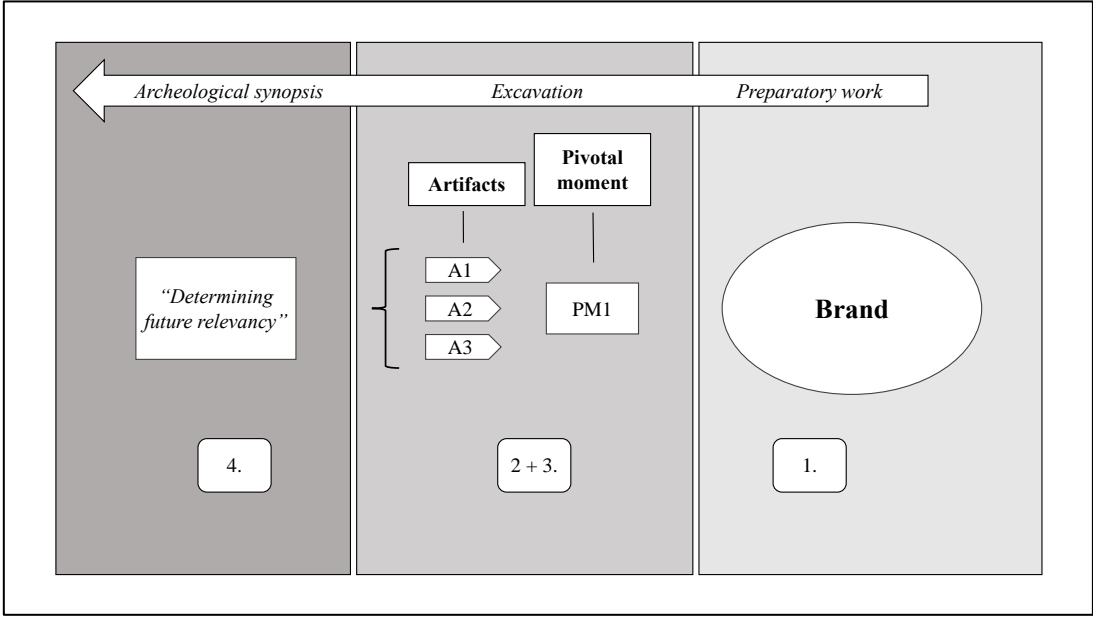


Figure 11: The Brand Archeology Framework - "Overview"

The "final version" of the BAF is now presented (Figure 12) and explained on the basis of the "overview" (Figure 11). The main difference between the two illustrations is the width the latter includes, i.e., utilizing multiple pivotal moments and artifacts and showcasing the whole process from start to finish.

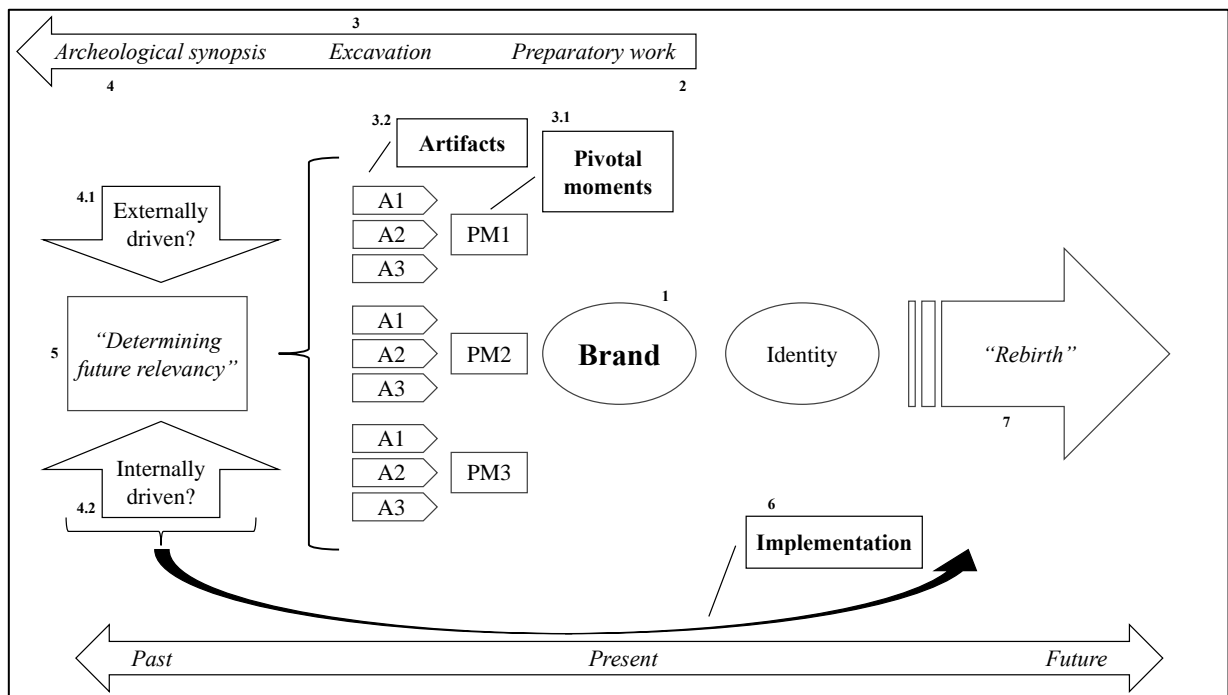


Figure 12: The Brand Archeology Framework

This final version is numerically sorted to manage the walkthrough holistically. All of the sections, from one to seven, are now explained thoroughly:

1. The first section is the "Brand" – where the researcher starts with defining and analyzing the brand today. In our work, the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix developed by Urde (Urde, 2013; Urde, 2021) was utilized. However, other forms and models to determine the start point are also applicable.
2. The second section is "Preparatory work" – which implies "diving" deeper into the brand itself and collecting relevant data to find past pivotal moments for the brand, for example, mergers, acquisitions, product launches, brand changes, etc. This section further entails scoping what needs to be found out, whom to enquire, and how to achieve desired results.
3. The third section is labeled as "Excavation" – which additionally includes sections 3.1 and 3.2 ("Pivotal moments" and "Artifacts"), functions as the "dig" element, through what discoveries are made and contextualized to "Pivotal moments" and "Artifacts". Pivotal moments – are established, in our case, through interviews, which create specific moments, that are deemed as important for the brand. Furthermore, helping to roadmap the brand's evolution and explain the journey thus far. Artifacts, then, function and represent the reasons for the pivotal moments – established through analysis. In other words, artifacts illustrate the decisions and moments leading to the pivotal change within the brand.

4. The fourth section is "Archeological synopsis" – which also includes sections 4.1 and 4.2 ("Externally driven?" and " Internally driven?"), establishing the understanding of the findings in the previous section – and determining if they were internally or externally driven. For example, an externally driven pivotal moment could be Covid-19, while an internally driven pivotal moment could be a product or technological development.
5. The fifth section is named "Determining future relevancy" – which implies reflecting back to all discussed sections and determining if they align with the current brand and weather they "make the cut" or not. For instance, an externally driven pivotal moment connected to the 90s financial depression could be utilized in refining the brand today (2023). The same idea drives the internal aspect, for example, from an organizational change of dividing the brand into cross-functioning groups – which could also be utilized today (2023).
6. The sixth section is "Implementation" – which communicates the further use of the conducted research by the BAF and also marks the end of the archeological dig. Now it is up to the authorized persons or organization's evaluation to utilize this new data for future purposes.
7. Finally, the seventh section, labeled as "Rebirth" – illustrates the whole framework tough a line from the present to the past and the future – viewing the entire process holistically and utilizing it as deemed fitting.

By the use of the Brand Archeology Framework, brands now have a tool to function as a "idea creator" as stated above, and more importantly, a specific concept of bringing elements from the past to the future, and through that strengthening, influencing, and creating a more holistic and robust brand identity for the future.

6 Discussion

This section focuses on the reflections, insights, and elaborations created through the research journey, focusing on our framework before providing the conclusion of our thesis. This section will be more abstract as we discuss further usages of the framework and its potential.

As this research nears completion, it is crucial to participate in in-depth thought and conversation about the framework and the developed form of the phenomena known as brand archaeology. This phenomenon has not only given birth to a highly flexible framework but spawned a new outlook of diverse disciplines, fostering an interdisciplinary approach that defies conventional boundaries and transcends the limitations of traditional modes of knowledge acquisition. This study has attempted to facilitate the expansion of horizons, enabling the exploration of uncharted territory where the realms of information gathering, knowledge acquisition, and diverse methodological approaches intermingle and intertwine harmoniously by integrating the insights stemming from in-depth interviews conducted with archaeologists and the knowledge encapsulated within the hallowed pages of branding literature. Surprisingly, during the rigorous and comprehensive process of the literature assessment, this unique synthesis and interconnection were not encountered or uncovered within the vast corpus of current studies or literature.

The overall Brand Archaeology Framework contains potential worth for the complexities of study centering around brand identity and the larger discipline of branding as a whole. Keller (1998) astutely observed and highlighted the remarkable case of the iconic champagne brand 'G. H. Mumm,' - wherein a transformative visual identity modification was deftly executed by meticulously analyzing the historical records of its illustrious equestrian origins. As a result, it becomes abundantly clear that the framework assists and expedites the intricate and highly nuanced process of discerning and meticulously unearthing these artifacts and transformative moments throughout the vast tapestry of a brand's history. The tangible benefits are undeniably obvious when one considers the astute observations made by scholars such as Urde et al. (2007) concerning the enduringly iconic and unmistakable brand aura emanating from prominent entities such as Nike, resplendent with its 'swoosh' emblem and the captivatingly resonant tagline 'Just Do It.' Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly clear that many brands have an intrinsic potential for iconic status that sometimes needs to be explored and noticed by the brand custodians themselves. As a result, the Brand Archaeology Framework gains an additional dimension and a level of significance as it serves as a compass, skillfully unearthing and shining a bright light on these iconic artifacts that possess the remarkable potential to steadfastly solidify and fortify a brand's position within the seemingly limitless realm of cultural relevance.

Even more remarkable is the understanding that the phenomena established via this study emerge as an adaptable and comprehensive model with ramifications extending far beyond the branding realm's confines. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the paradigmatic framework can be harnessed and applied within a range of diverse contexts, ranging from the captivating world of sports teams, wherein one can analyze the web of factors that underpin past successes, ascertaining whether it was an extraordinary individual player who singlehandedly propelled the team, or if it is something intangible like team spirit or club culture. The crafted framework developed through this extensive exploration could be a profoundly insightful tool to restore a besieged team to its former glory, enabling the comprehension and holistic understanding of the hallowed historical factors that propelled the team to previously unparalleled heights of success. Furthermore, the vast spectrum of applicability, which reaches its tendrils into the corporate sector and resonates with clarity within the sacred corridors of financial institutions, should not be underestimated. The framework has the potential within this engaging arena to untangle and clarify the subtleties underneath the seemingly cryptic conundrum of an organization's development and subsequent drop in profitability. The framework reveals and visualizes the tapestry of historical events that influenced the organization's trajectory by casting a discerning eye on multifaceted factors such as ill-fated investments, misguided personnel decisions, or even the insidious impact of external forces on profitability. Furthermore, the possibilities stretch much beyond, covering the ethereal domain of reputation. It can thus further the insights needed to develop its reputation with identity and history as its core. The framework emerges as an analytical tool for weaving complicated stories and designing strategic communications, providing comprehensive and nuanced knowledge of reputation as it changes.

By going into the results of this study, it becomes increasingly interesting to see and evaluate the nuanced divergences in critical times across the three brands studied. While two of the brands, Ericsson and Lemminkäinen, experienced significant organizational changes, such as mergers or full acquisitions, resulting in a profound metamorphosis of their brand identity. On the other hand, Absolut remarkably managed to retain its brand's core essence over time, skillfully navigating potential tension through the solid foundation of internal work. As a result, it is plausible to assume that the brands that finally faded into oblivion had a more significant degree of volatility and internally driven crucial moments to a far greater level. Nonetheless, it is critical to recognize that this study was naturally limited to the limited span comprising the respected interviewees' work within the separate firms. It would undeniably be enthralling and illuminating to conduct an extensive archaeological exploration encompassing the entire chronology of the companies, stretching further back in time, thereby providing a truly comprehensive roadmap of the brands' evolution.

However, realizing and accepting that while this designed framework offers a new and unique answer to a possible problem is critical, it is not the only and final way. To gain a comprehensive and profound understanding of a brand's remarkable evolution, it may be necessary to meticulously scrutinize ancient and time-honored financial records or conduct an astute and discerning analysis of the competitive landscape prevailing at a given time. For example, when examining Ericsson Mobile Communication's astounding success during its

early phases, one can see that it resulted from a higher budget allocation and increased expenditure in marketing activities, mostly driven by the development of the important subsidiary.

7 Conclusion

As presented in chapter one, our thesis aimed to *discover pivotal moments influencing brand identity through revitalizing the concept deemed as brand archeology*. The aim is to develop a novel theory at the intersection of the three research fields of archeology, corporate brand identity, and storytelling from a corporate perspective. We propose a framework through which the phenomenon of pivotal moments and their influence is explained by utilizing the concept of brand archeology. Thus, we posed three research questions that would guide our research:

RQ1) How do pivotal moments in a brand's history shape its identity and influence its future?

RQ2) Why is understanding the pivotal moments in a brand's history and their influence on its identity essential for effective strategic brand management?

RQ3) What is the role of brand archeology in the strategic management of a brand, and how can it be leveraged to enhance a brand's identity?

As a result of the analysis of our data collection, we defined what "pivotal moments" are in the context of brand and management;

A pivotal moment is a critical point or transformative juncture in time that had significant implications or consequences on the business, which has the power to significantly influence and shape the future course of the brand.

We furthermore defined and created the Brand Archaeology Framework which visualizes the path brands must take in order to identify, analyze and comprehend their pivotal moments. The definition for brand archaeology is as following:

Brand Archaeology is the exploration and systematic study of a brand's past with the aim of discovering and understanding its pivotal moments which shapes its brand identity and strategic brand management.

Based on our analysis, and our framework, we can conclude and answer the three research questions posed.

RQ1) How do pivotal moments in a brand's history shape its identity and influence its future?

As for research question one, according to our findings, the severity of pivotal moments substantially affects the level of brand identity change. We discovered that a modest action, such as completing market research, allowed the Absolut brand to be sold for 55 billion SEK without changing its identity. On the other hand, Ericsson had three significant pivotal moments that continually transformed its brand identity. This indicates that crucial events, depending on their severity, have the capacity to fundamentally change a brand's identity, putting it on a completely new path in the future. However, this can also illuminate the frail composition of the brand identity, starting at its conception.

RQ2) Why is understanding the pivotal moments in a brand's history and their influence on its identity essential for effective strategic brand management?

Recognizing pivotal moments inside a business aids in understanding its current brand position. By diving into the causes of the brand's formation, one may track the progression of its brand core values. Analyzing pivotal moments enables firms to learn from past failures and implement previously successful ideas. However, it is critical to analyze the contextual aspects surrounding these significant times and determine whether prior decisions are still relevant in the present.

RQ3) What is the role of brand archeology in the strategic management of a brand, and how can it be leveraged to enhance a brand's identity?

Finally, in response to the third question, brand archaeology is vital in strategic brand management, especially for organizations with a rich history and legacy. Brands may renew themselves by learning about their past and using the framework. G.H. Mumm is an example, as they rejuvenated their brand by concentrating on the expressive part of brand management by examining their equestrian history. Similarly, companies may use the framework internally to better understand prior competencies, leadership styles, and cultural expressions, giving organizations a better grasp of the brand's evolution.

7.1 Theoretical Contributions

This thesis has produced three key theoretical advances that contribute to the advancement of business research. These contributions are described in depth further down.

7.1.1 Creation and Introduction to The Brand Archaeology Framework.

The development and implementation of the Brand Archaeology Framework is one of the thesis's key theoretical contributions. Our approach offers renewal and modernization of the discipline of brand archaeology, which focuses on unearthing a brand's past and exploiting it

for strategic brand management. We have bridged the gap between these academic domains and expanded on the underlying theories by mixing archaeology approaches with branding strategies. The Brand Archaeology Framework offers a systematic and all-encompassing framework for researching a brand's history, heritage, and pivotal moments. It provides a systematic method that goes beyond typical brand management approaches by embracing concepts like excavation, interpretation, and synthesis to uncover valuable insights.

Our methodology allows for a more in-depth knowledge of a brand's history and gives strategic direction for brand management. It encourages scholars and practitioners to investigate a brand's historical characteristics, identify pivotal moments and use them to influence strategic decision-making. The framework provides a new viewpoint on understanding and renewing brands by blending historical study with modern branding tactics.

7.1.2 Definition and Exploration of Pivotal Moments

This thesis also makes a theoretical contribution by developing and defining the idea of "pivotal moments" in the context of brand and management study. We define pivotal moments as follows: *"A pivotal moment is a critical point or transformative juncture in time that had significant implications or consequences on the business, which has the power to significantly influence and shape the future course of the brand"*

Researchers and practitioners may obtain significant insights into the factors influencing brand evolution and strategic decision-making by identifying and analyzing pivotal moments. Our concept highlights the significance of identifying and evaluating pivotal moments as major drivers of brand growth. It emphasizes the importance of considering the effect of pivotal events or actions that have defined a brand's trajectory. Our thesis adds to a better understanding of the dynamics and forces that shape brands through time by focusing on critical events. It provides a framework for assessing the influence of certain events, actions, or situations on a brand's identity and strategic direction. Researchers and practitioners may make informed judgments, avoid repeating previous mistakes, and profit from successful techniques used throughout the brand's history by identifying the relevance of pivotal moments.

These theoretical contributions have consequences not just for brand archaeology but also for brand management, corporate strategy, and organizational history more broadly. Researchers and practitioners may get valuable insights for strategic decision-making, brand positioning, and cultivating brand authenticity by identifying the significance of a brand's past and comprehending pivotal moments. Furthermore, our study provides the groundwork for future research that will broaden and deepen the Brand Archaeology Framework's application and prospective contributions to the discipline.

7.1.3 Method Cross-Fertilization

We devised a new and cross-fertilized technique that relies on the strengths and methodology of both disciplines after considerable research into the intersections of archaeology and brand management. This novel method combines the rigor and analytical tools of archaeology with the strategic outlook and consumer-centric emphasis of brand management, providing a unique viewpoint on brand understanding and management.

We developed a framework that allowing brand researcher to deep dive into the historical layers of a brand and uncover pivotal moments and brand values by integrating archaeological principles such as artifact analysis, historical data interpretation, and contextual understanding. This methodological cross-fertilization allows brand managers to go beyond typical market research and surface-level analysis, getting a more comprehensive insight of the brand's history, evolution, and potential.

The development of this cross-fertilized strategy necessitated a thorough review of the underlying ideas and methodology of both archaeology and brand management. We were able to discover critical areas of alignment and synergy between the two domains by recognizing the similar aims of revealing meaning, analyzing data, and understanding human behavior.

Thus, we enabled a methodical way to incorporating archaeological methodologies into the brand management process. The excavation and study of brand artifacts, the interpretation of historical brand performance data and the examination of contextual elements that impact brand perception are all part of this methodology.

Furthermore, this cross-pollinated approach brings up new options for study and innovation in archaeology and brand management. It supports interdisciplinary cooperation among researchers and practitioners from both fields, facilitating information sharing and the creation of new theoretical frameworks and practical techniques. This exchange of ideas and approaches has the potential to develop the areas of archaeology and brand management, leading to a better knowledge of human behavior, culture, and the role of brands in modern society.

7.2 Managerial Implications

Understanding the historical context and pivotal moments in a brand's history is critical for managers to make educated decisions and develop a strong brand identity in today's highly competitive business world. In this section, we will investigate the management implications of the criteria established in our study, taking into account the Brand Archaeology Framework and our concept of pivotal moments. By harnessing this information, companies may efficiently manage their brands, increase client loyalty, and generate long-term growth.

The Brand Archaeology Framework highlights the significance of studying a brand's historical environment in order to uncover pivotal moments that have impacted its identity and values. Managers should devote time and resources to studying and recording the brand's history, including the foundation narrative, critical milestones, and notable events. This comprehension will reveal insights into the brand's underlying principles and unique selling proposition, which can then be presented to customers successfully. Managers should promote cross-functional collaboration among marketing, communication, and research teams to find historical data and generate engaging brand narratives.

Pivotal moments in a brand's history are crucial events that have substantially influenced its trajectory and reputation. Product debuts, mergers, social responsibility efforts, and technology developments are examples of such occasions. Managers must identify and study these watershed moments to understand how they created the brand's identity and influenced client views. Managers may establish plans to harness favorable elements and resolve any bad connotations by understanding the major variables that led to the brand's success or issues during these occasions.

Managers should use the Brand Archaeology Framework and pivotal moments to reinforce the brand's identity and values. Companies may separate themselves from the competition and develop stronger emotional ties with customers by stressing the brand's distinct background and the values it stands for. Managers should create marketing campaigns and communication strategies emphasizing the brand's significant events, incorporating them successfully into storytelling and brand narratives. This strategy increases not only brand awareness but also brand loyalty and trust.

Understanding pivotal moments and the brand's historical context allows managers to engage customers more deeply. Companies may construct marketing strategies that resonate with the emotions and values of their customers by using pivotal moments. Managers should utilize social media platforms and other digital marketing channels to tell tales about critical times in the brand's history, allowing customers to join them on their journey. This may be accomplished through user-generated content campaigns, contests, and storytelling efforts encouraging customers to contribute their brand-related experiences and memories. While pivotal moments and historical context can give valuable insights, managers must also focus on innovation and adaptability to remain relevant in a volatile market. Managers may find areas for development and innovation by studying the lessons learned from pivotal moments. They should foster a culture of continual learning and experimentation, allowing the brand to change and adapt to shifting client preferences and market trends. This might be product diversity, technology breakthroughs, or sustainability activities that align with the brand's fundamental values.

Thus, managers may successfully manage their brands and develop meaningful connections with customers using the Brand Archaeology Framework and pivotal moments. Understanding the historical backdrop and major events that established the brand's identity enables the creation of captivating storylines that resonate with customers. These insights also allow managers to reaffirm the brand's values, engage customers on a deeper level, create

brand loyalty, and drive innovation. Companies that embrace brand archaeology may represent themselves as authentic and trustworthy, gaining a competitive edge in the market and paving the route for long-term success.

To conclude this section, we want to provide future managers, who might want to apply the framework in order to find their pivotal moments, with suggestions on how to proceed. We recommend managers to proceed in the following manner when applying the Brand Archaeology Framework on their respective brands:

- Start by analyzing the brand in its current form – i.e. what, who and where the brand is today. If the goal is to identify the brand identity, we recommend using the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Urde, 2013; Urde, 2021), in order to establish the foundation of the dig.
- Secondly, managers need to identify where their relevant data is located. This is what we call “Preparatory work”, which entails finding employees, documents or other relevant sources for the data required.
- When the “Preparatory work” is finalized, “Excavation” begins. We recommend managers to dig and extract the data identified in the step above.
- Now it is time to analyze the data, and start identifying the pivotal moments and its attached artifacts. This step is crucial, as it lays the groundwork for the road mapping of the brand. Thus, be careful and precise in this step.
- When the pivotal moments and the artifacts are identified, managers should proceed with “Archaeological synopsis”. Here managers need to use their discretions and determine if the artifacts leading up to the pivotal moments are internally or externally driven.
- When the artifacts and pivotal moments are established as either internally or externally driven, managers need to determine if it is relevant in today’s world. I.e. if the pivotal moment was externally driven, is it relevant today? Or was it something that could only occur in the past, and thus not relevant?
- When determined if relevant or not, managers can make informed decision about the future based on the insights into the organizations past. Thus, the final step for managers is “Implementation.
- And finally, if desired, managers can “Revitalize” their brand, based on the insights on its past established by the Brand Archaeology Framework.

7.3 Limitations and future research

Like many others, this thesis has limitations and potential for future research. In this section, we will describe the limitations faced during the conception of the thesis and suggest ideas for future research.

One of the most significant limitations of this thesis is the few companies analyzed and the fact that they were active within very different industries. Furthermore, the number of managers and former directors interviewed might have played a role in creating the analysis and its subsequent framework. However, due to the scope of the thesis, and the strict and narrow sampling strategy we employed, we had to make the best use of the set of criteria we created. It could be interesting to conduct interviews with former employees who worked in different departments of the selected companies, such as HR or R&D, as they might interpret the past in a different light due to their profession.

This thesis has established the groundwork for further investigation into the function of pivotal moments in brand archaeology and management. However, some areas require more research to improve our understanding of brand pivotal moments and their repercussions. In this part, we discuss potential future study options, emphasizing the influence of social media, cultural and societal issues, brand resilience, and branding in crisis communication.

A future study might look at the impact of social media in amplifying and extending brand pivotal moments. Understanding the impact of social media platforms on significant occasions is critical because they have revolutionized how information is shared and consumed. Researchers might investigate how social media platforms contribute to the quick transmission of information, consumer debates, and the overall influence on brand reputation at pivotal moments. This might entail examining the content and emotion of social media conversations surrounding crucial occasions and determining the consequences for brand perception and customer behavior. Furthermore, cultural and societal influences heavily influence brand perceptions and responses to pivotal moments. Future studies might examine how cultural values, social conventions, and public opinion impact the incidence and significance of key occasions. Cross-cultural comparisons would be especially useful in discovering cultural differences in brand perception and response to crucial times. Research may assist firms in tailoring their tactics to various cultural settings and anticipating the effect of pivotal moments in various regions.

Another topic suitable for investigation is the idea of brand resilience in the context of pivotal moments. Unlike less established businesses, brands with a strong foundation and brand equity are frequently better positioned to endure and recover from pivotal moments. Researchers might investigate how brand resilience affects pivotal moment management, finding techniques and qualities contributing to a brand's recovery capacity. This might entail researching instances of brands that have successfully traversed pivotal moments and finding similar traits or behaviors that contribute to their resilience. Future studies should focus on the

interaction between brand pivotal moments and crisis communication. During and after a crisis, organizations confront particular problems in successfully communicating and maintaining their brand. Researchers might investigate how pivotal moments impact crisis communication techniques and the efficacy of various approaches. Researchers might get insights into how firms traverse key events and maintain or rebuild their brand reputation through strategic communication initiatives by researching real-life situations.

Future studies might use both quantitative and qualitative techniques to improve the field of brand archaeology. Structured interviews and surveys might be used in quantitative research to gather internal perspectives and impressions of a brand's pivotal moments, offering a quantified roadmap of its past. To acquire a better understanding of the lived experiences and emotions connected with crucial occasions, these methodologies might be supplemented by qualitative research approaches such as interviews, focus groups, and content analysis of archive material.

References

Absolut (n.d.). Homepage. <https://www.absolut.com/sv-se/> [Accessed 28 May 2023]

Akaah, I. & Riordan, E. (1989). Judgments of Marketing Professionals About Ethical Issues in Marketing Research: A Replication and Extension. *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp.112-135.

Balmer, J. M.T. & Greyser, S A (2006). Corporate marketing : Integrating corporate identity, corporate branding, corporate communications, corporate image and corporate reputation. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 40, Issue 7/8, pp. 730-741

Balmer, J.M., (2012). Strategic corporate brand alignment: perspective from identity based views of corporate brands. *Eur. J. Market.* 46 (7/8), 1064-1092.

Balmer, J.M.T. (2008), "Identity based views of the corporation: Insights from corporate identity, organisational identity, social identity, visual identity, corporate brand identity and corporate image", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 42 No. 9/10, pp. 879-906

Balmer, J.M.T. & Gray, E.R. (2003). Corporate brands: what are they? What of them? *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(7/8), 972-997.

Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2012). *Business research methods*, 3th edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

C. M. Haugtvedt and K. M. Carlson (1998). Brand archaeology: Rediscovering lost brands and brand meanings" *Journal of Advertising*.

Cooper, H., Merrilees, B. & Miller, D. Corporate heritage brand management: Corporate heritage brands versus contemporary corporate brands. *J Brand Manag* 22, 412–430 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1057/bm.2015.17>

Cross, N. (1990). The nature and nurture of design ability. *Design Studies*, 11(3), 127–140. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0142-694x\(90\)90002-t](https://doi.org/10.1016/0142-694x(90)90002-t)

Davies, G. & Chun, R. (2002). Gaps Between the Internal and External Perceptions of the Corporate Brand, *Corporate Reputation Review*, vol. 5, no. 2/3, pp144–158.

- Denning, S. (2006). Effective storytelling: strategic business narrative techniques. *Strategy & Leadership*, vol. 34 Issue 1, pp.42-48
- Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson. (2015). *Management & Business Research*, 15th edn, London: Sage.
- Eisenhardt, K. (1989). Building Theories from Case Study Research, *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp.532-550.
- Eisenhardt, K. & Graebner, M. (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges, *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp.25-32.
- Ericsson (n.d.). Changing the World – Phone for everyone.
<https://www.ericsson.com/en/about-us/history/changing-the-world/phones-for-everyone>
[Accessed 12 May 2023]
- Ericsson a (n.d.). Ericsson logo. <https://www.ericsson.com/en/newsroom/media-kits/logo>
[Accessed 28 May 2023]
- Fisher, W.R. (1984). Narration as a human communication paradigm: The case of public moral argument. *Communications Monographs*, vol.51 no. 1, pp.1-22
- Fog, K., Budtz, C., Munch, P., & Blanchette, S. (2010). Storytelling. In Springer eBooks.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-88349-4>
- Geertz, C (1973). *The Interpretation of Culture*. New York: Basic Books
- Glaser, B. & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies of qualitative research*. London: Wiedenfeld and Nicholson.
- Greyser, S.A. (2009) Corporate brand reputation and brand crisis management. *Management Decision* 47 (4): 590–602
- Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hair, J. F., Money, A. G., Samouel, P., & Page, M. I. (2015). *Essentials of Business Research Methods*. In Routledge eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429203374>

- Hatch, M. J. & Schultz, M (2008). Taking brand initiative. How companies can align strategy, culture, and identity through corporate branding. Hoboken : John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2008
- Hatch, M.J. & Schultz, M. (2001). Are the strategic stars aligned for your corporate brand? *Harvard Business Review*, 79(2), 128-134.
- Hopkinson, G.C. & Hogarth-Scott, S. (2001). " What happened was..." broadening the agenda for storied research. *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol.17, no. 1-2, pp.27-47
- Iglesias, O., Ind, N., & Schultz, M. (Eds.). (2022). *The Routledge Companion to Corporate Branding* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi-org.ludwig.lub.lu.se/10.4324/9781003035749>
- Ind, N. (2001). Corporate identity and corporate strategy: Towards a framework for understanding. *European Journal of Marketing*, 35(3/4), 428-441.
- K. L Keller (1988). Brand archaeology: Uncovering the past of branded products, *Journal of Advertising Research*
- Kahneman, D. & Tversky, A. (1973). On the psychology of prediction, *Psychological Review*, vol. 80, no. 4, pp.237-251.
- Kapferer, J.N. (2012). *The new Strategic Brand Management*, 5th edn, London: Kogan Page
- Keller, K.L. (1998). *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kivinen, J. (2021). *LEMMINKÄISEN HARHAHETKET: Perheyhtiön tuho*. Aviador.
- Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L. (2012) *Marketing Management*. 14th Edition, Pearson Education.
- Kvale, S. (1994). Ten standard Objections to Qualitative Research Interviews, *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp.147-173.
- LeCompte, M. D. & Goetz, J. P (1982). Problems of Reliability and Validity in Ethnographic Research. *Review of Educational Research*, 52: 31- 60
- Lundahl, U. & Skärvad, P-H. (1999). *Utredningsmetodik för samhällsvetare och ekonomer*, 3rd edn, Lund: Studentlitteratur.

- Mason, J (1996). *Qualitative Researching*. London: Sage
- Miles, M. (1979). Qualitative Data as an Attractive Nuisance: The Problem of Analysis, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp.590-601.
- Miles, M. (1979). Qualitative Data as an Attractive Nuisance: The Problem of Analysis, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp.590-601.
- Miles, M. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*, 2nd edn, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Osbourne, R (1991). *Business Horizons*. Sep/Oct91, Vol. 34 Issue 5, p28. 7p. 4 Charts.
- Pernod Ricard (n.d.). Our Brands: Absolut. <https://www.pernod-ricard.com/en/brands/absolut> [Accessed: 13 May 2023]
- Pöttker, H. (2003). News and its communicative quality: the inverted pyramid - when and why did it appear? *Journalism Studies*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp.501-511.
- Prahalad, C.K. and Hamel, G. (1990), "The core competence of the corporation", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 68, May/June, pp. 79-91.
- Renfrew, C., & Bahn, P. (2018). *Archaeology: Theories, methods, and practice*. Thames & Hudson.
- Rennstam, J. (2023). Lecture 6: Qualitative Research Methods, BUSR31, PowerPoint presentation, LUSEM Lund, 16 February 2023.
- Ritchie, L. (2013). *Metaphor (Key Topics in Semantics and Pragmatics)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9781139136822
- Ryan, G. W. & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes, *Field methods*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp.85-109.
- Scott, J. W. (2011). STORYTELLING. *History and Theory*, 50(2), 203–209. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41300078>
- Siggelkow, N. (2007). Persuasion with case studies, *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp.20–24.

- The Absolut Company (n.d.). Absolut Vodka. <https://theabsolutcompany.com/brands/absolut-vodka/> [Accessed: 13 May 2023]
- Tuuri, A. (2010). Lemminkäisen sata vuotta: Merisatamasta maailman ääriin. Hämeenlinna : Kariston Kirjapaino Oy.
- Tversky, A. & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases, *Science*, vol. 185, no. 4157, pp.1124-1131.
- Urde (2013). Corporate Brand Identity Matrix. *Journal of Brand Management*.
- Urde (2021). Welcome to the Matrix. Forthcoming book.
- Urde, M. (2003). Core value-based corporate brand building. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(7/8), 1017-1040.
- Urde, M. (2003). Core value-based corporate brand building. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(7/8), 1017-1040.
- Urde, M. & Koch, C. (2014). Market and brand-oriented schools of positioning, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 23, no. 7 pp.478 – 490.
- Urde, M. & Koch, C. (2014). Market and brand-oriented schools of positioning, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 23, no. 7 pp.478 – 490.
- Urde, M. and Greyser, S (2019). What does you corporate brand stand for?, *Harvard Business Review*, Jan/Feb, 2019
- Urde, M. and Greyser, S (2019). What does you corporate brand stand for?, *Harvard Business Review*, Jan/Feb, 2019
- Wheeler, A. (2013). Designing brand identity. [Elektronisk resurs] : an essential guide for the whole branding team (4th ed.). John Wiley.
- Yin, R. K (1994). Discovering the future of the case study method in evaluation research. *Evaluation Practice*, October, 15(3):283-290

YIY. (2022). YIT 2022 Annual Review. YIT Group.

https://www.yitgroup.com/siteassets/investors/annualreports/2022/yit_vuosikatsaus_2022_en.pdf - Access: 01.05.2023

Appendix A – Interview Guide

Introduction

What was your role at (the company), and when did you work there?

- Different roles?

What were your responsibilities within (the company)?

Brand identity & core values

How do you define [the company's] brand?

Which are the most important aspects of the brand?

What were [the company's] core values?

Did you and your team members live these values during your time at the company?

Digging

Can you think of any pivotal moments during your career? That had a drastic impact on the brand and company overall?

- What happened?

Can you describe the changes of the company before and after the pivotal moment occurred in your own words?

*Use Matrix elements if needed to keep conversation flowing

*Use “Path” questions if needed to keep conversation flowing

How was the change implemented/communicated internally and externally?

Did you notice a change after the “pivotal moment”? (Internally and externally)

Final questions

We have performed an analysis of the company today. **Present the findings**. Do you have any comments on this?

Is there anything particular that we have not discussed that you would like to add?

Is there anything that you could recommend for us to look into in order to get other perspectives and insights on what we have just discussed?