



Brand Revitalisation – Focusing on Renovating Offerings

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ABSTRACT

Brand on the comeback trail needs revolutionary changes rather than evolutionary changes. Brands most likely to respond to revitalisation efforts are those that have clear and relevant values that have been left dormant for a long time. Brand revitalization is a process, which is often necessary when the brand's offer of products as well as associated attention from consumers decline. Even so, the core of a brand needs to be clearly defined, in order for brand revitalization to be successfully implemented. Marketing managers need to be able to recognize the acute, as well as the latent signs of brand aging, and need to implement brand revitalization elements and strategies that are most suitable for a certain brand. This article focuses on identifying the factors affecting brand revitalization and suggests possible renovative offerings for successful brands.

Keywords: Brand, Brand revitalization, Renovative offerings

INTRODUCTION

A brand's fortunes are influenced by the forces contained in its market environment like demographic, economic technological and competitive shifts. Thus, in order to keep the brand healthy, efforts are needed to manage its associations so that its fit with the market is maintained. Brand is a firm asset that contributes identity and character, guides consumers for product choices and forms the relations among consumers. Brand has several benefits for firms, consumers and society. In terms of consumers, brand is a quality indicator and creates awareness for products J. Kapferer (2008)¹. In terms of firms, brand provides customer loyalty, consistent sales amount and a high profit margin P. Kotler (2006)²As a result of consumer and firm benefits, brand plays a key role on social development. In

intense competence conditions, firms need to create strong brands in order to survive and gain a competitive advantage K L Keller(2001)³

Brand revitalization is needed when brand declines because of market shifts. Major revitalization strategies include: increasing usage, entering in new markets, executing image changes and brand enhancement. Sometimes no amount of revitalization efforts can save a brand. Revitalisation strategies do not hold out any promise. In such situations, the brand becomes a candidate for elimination. Management must then decide upon the appropriate strategy for eliminating the brand. Kapferer (2008) indicates that the brand revitalization consists of "recreating a consistent flow of sales, putting the brand back to life, on the growth slop again". That is, the brand revitalization is a process of recapturing and creating the equity of a brand and then creating durable sales and making the brand returns back to growth again. As many brands die in the maturity stage or some die before completing their growth life cycle stage. Even though some mature brands are able to sustain in mature stage .The reason for the same is brand revitalization through which brand is either given new look, new logo or new position. Brand revitalization helps in today's competitive scenario where the companies are struggling for the major market share and to sustain the same. To face the challenges of the market companies go for brand revitalization which is "when the brand attributes and overall strategy is still sound, i.e., given the competitive set, customers, industry dynamics that the brand values still are valid, marketable and meaningful Return on Investment (ROI) but there is a need to re-launch the brand messaging strategy" rather than launching a new brand.

Keller (1999)⁴ in the article *Managing Brands For The Long Run: Brand Reinforcement And Revitalization Strategies* had broadly classified the brand revitalization strategy under two head namely expanding brand awareness and improving brand image. He also describes the brand revitalization as 'return to their roots', and to recapture lost sources or establish new source of equity for brands. The different strategies of brand revitalization may consist of emotional branding, retro-branding and storytelling. Gobe (2007)⁵ states that emotional branding indicates the establishment of a relationship between the consumer and the brand; it stems from the emotional and sensual levels and the end goal is a long-lasting, deep and meaningful connection between the two. Retro-branding indicates a resurrection of specific attributes from the brand's past, attributes which are adapted to a more modern market place and the current aspirations of the consumer (Brown et al., 2003)⁶. In short, retro-branding means the returning of a brand into the market place with the use of certain revitalized elements of the brand's heritage. Storytelling, according to McLellan (2006)⁷, is one of the basic aspects of human intelligence and imagination, and is a powerful communication tool that requires complete

attention and, more often than not, the listener's direct involvement.

Methodology

This article aims at to identify the various factors affecting brand revitalization and suggest possible renovating offerings for major corporate brand. The study is exploratory in nature. Secondary data were used for the study. The secondary data collected from the existing studies, journals, brochures and websites.

Brand Revitalisation

Revitalising deals with such brands which are old but if redirected may have plenty of life. This can be substantially less costly and risky than introducing a new brand. To recover and reposition brand in mind of consumer when it is not working successfully is known as Brand Revitalization. A brand may lose its share /image on the market, when the value it provides, the functions and benefits it delivers are no longer in demand. Not all brands can be revitalized. Similarly, it may not also be possible to achieve the same height at which the brand once was still there are possibilities for injecting life into a brand. The major factors of brand revitalization shows below:

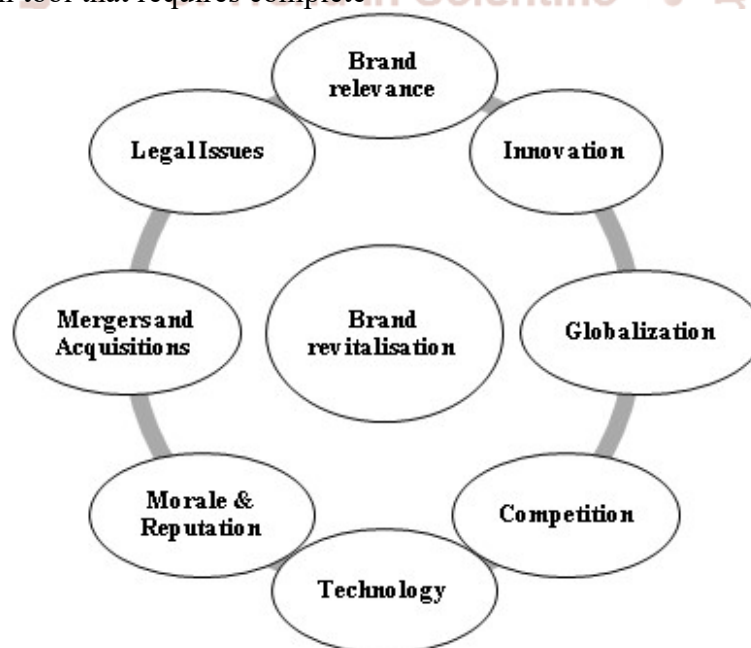


Figure No: 1 Major factors of brand revitalization

Brand relevance: Brand relevance is never a sure thing. Anything can change at any moment. As a result, smart brands understand the rules of relevance, and earn and re-earn their position in the market place each and every day. The brand should be modified in accordance with the changes in tastes and preferences

of customers and it should cater the need of target market.

Competition: In a fast moving environment with aggressive competition, rebranding may be required to change the offering to the market in order to create a more compelling reason to buy in the minds of the

target audience. In order to meet with the offerings and technology of competitor, the company has to design its brand accordingly so as to sustain in the market.

Globalization: Globalisation bridges the gap between global and local market, and it works well for brands as well as consumers. Sometimes rebranding is required because of globalisation where the same product sold across multiple markets is inconsistent or different e.g. Marathon's change to Snickers, Opal Fruits changes to Starburst, Jif's change to Cif.

Innovation: If a brand is technology related e.g. internet, software, hardware and the product offering constantly innovating then the brand frequently follows the natural and fast rate of change. To be considered innovative, brands must regularly have something fresh for consumers to talk about. For example, laundry detergent producers can add ingredients to extend freshness longer or eliminate wrinkles.

Legal Issues: Some legal issues may force a brand to go under brand revitalization such as copyrights, bankruptcy, etc. In such situations, the brand has to be designed accordingly, and the branding is to be done in line with the legal requirements. For example The Jelly Bean Factory became The Jelly Bean Planet in Ireland to ensure differentiation from the USA brand Jelly Belly.

Mergers and Acquisitions: When two or more companies combine, they want the product to be designed from the scratch in a way that it appeals to both and benefits each simultaneously. This approach is usually most appropriate in categories undergoing an extreme level of transformation in which the merging entities wish to signal their own evolution. A good example is when GTE and Bell Atlantic, two old line phone companies, merged and created a new brand, Verizon.

Morale & Reputation: If a company brand has demoralised employees or confused customers then a rebrand may required. A rebrand in this instance can improve a brand's competitiveness by creating a common sense of purpose and unified identity, building staff morale and pride, as well as a way of attracting new customers, enhancing relationships with existing customers and attracting the best talent to the business.

Technology: Technology doesn't just give people a new way of doing things; it gives people a new way of thinking. The biggest impact of technology is the change it creates in people's perceptions. Certainly, technology expands access, speed and productivity, but technology has much more far-reaching effects that lead to revitalization.

Strategies for Band Revitalization

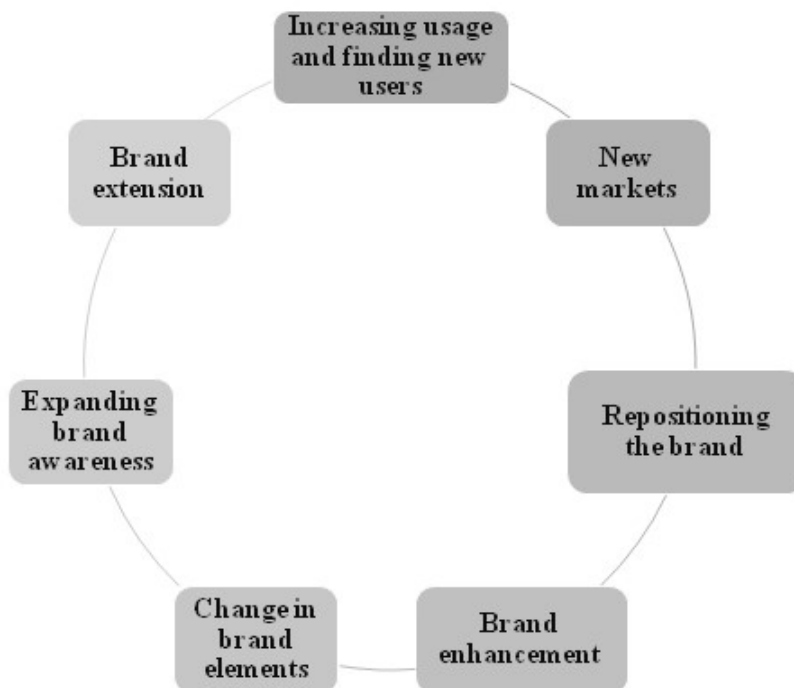


Figure No: 2 Strategies for Band Revitalization

1. The **Usage of a product can be increased** by continuously reminding about the brand to customers through advertisements. The other way of increasing frequency of purchase of a brand is to introduce new ways of usage of products. The benefits of the frequent use of a product can be communicated to increase the consumption, e.g., Cadbury was initially promoted as routine sweets and confectionery for children and adults as well. As a part of demographic adaption and a way to increase frequency of consumption, they started to promote it as an ideal gift for Diwali, Raksha bandhan to replace the traditional Indian sweets
2. The untapped market can be occupied by understanding the needs of the **new market segment**. The market for Dalda and Ambassador seem to have come to a standstill. It represents a generic change. In such situations one way a brand could be instilled with energy is to marginalize its focus on its current customers and focus instead on new customers. The brand revitalization can be done to cater to the needs of new customers, e.g.; Cadbury's milkmaid has been repositioned from being an 'indulgence for children' to an 'adult's delight'
3. The best way of getting the brand revitalized is through the **Re-positioning**. It means changing any of the 4 P's of marketing mix viz. product, price, place and promotion. The **best example** of re-positioning is Tata Nano. On its launch, it was tagged as the "cheapest Car" that hurt the sentiments of customers, and the sales fell drastically. To revive the sales, the new campaign was launched "Celebrate Awesomeness" that re-positioned its image in the minds of the customer.
4. The brand is one of the most important assets, so major corporate brands establishes various Customer **Brand Enhancement** program to build brand value. Eg: Surf: better convenience pack, stain removing power.
5. **Change in brand elements** like brand name itself, logo, characters, Packaging, jingles, celebrities can be modified and update over a period of time to revitalize brand. Tata Engineering became Tata Motors to signal its ambition to be seen as a global car company, not just an Indian truck maker. Another example, Red label is advertising change in its brand name process through involvement of people which is helping it in increasing its brand awareness.
6. **Brand awareness** is the probability that consumers are familiar about the life and

availability of the product. It is the degree to which consumers precisely associate the brand with the specific product. Brand awareness is improved to the extent to which brand names are selected that is simple and easy to pronounce or spell; known and expressive; and unique as well as distinct. For instance - Coca Cola has come to be known as Coke.

7. The **Brand Extension** is the marketing strategy wherein a new product is launched under the existing brand name. The category in which product is launched may be related or unrelated to the brand's current category. For instance, the brand Dove, was mainly known for soaps. But now it is extended too many products like shampoo, deodorant and body wash. The brand extension of the dove for the new products has been a great success. Adidas, company started its brand of shoes. Later they launched many products related to footwear, clothing, accessories, and sports.

Brand revitalization: way to success or failure

Important mature brands that still have positive impact on a company's overall strategy do require revitalization. There had been dearth of study reveal that the brand needs to be revitalized and on regular basis brand needs to be nurtured and cared for to have the brands long and sustainable life cycle.

Brand Revitalisation at **Dabur Company** took initiatives to launch various marketing programmes. These marketing programmes not only aimed to educate the customers but also helped in revitalizing the brand which was already being done by the company by launching new products. "Reinforcing brands involves ensuring innovation in product design, manufacturing and merchandising and ensuring relevance in user and usage imagery". Company also worked towards the logo and the packaging of the products and new designs so that customers can get attracted. The company revitalized that the brand Dabur was having so many meanings that the message that Dabur was health care division was not going to the public. They wanted to solve this problem so they went in for logo change in 2003. The new logo was created with the tagline of "Celebrate Life". To go with this logo change company also changed the packaging and they made it more alive and bright

The failure of Crystal Pepsi is a classic example of what happens when new products fail to align with

the characteristics that consumers know. Launched in 1993, with much hoopla, Crystal Pepsi was a colorless soda that was expected to become a billion dollar brand. It was discontinued two years later, having failed to fire. A key reason for the failure was that Pepsi never said why a drink people had come to expect to be a rich caramel color was suddenly clear. And that spooked buyers. Crystal Pepsi is not an isolated case. Each year, hundreds of thousands of products are introduced into the consumer packaged goods sector alone, and a huge number of them fail. Timing, competitiveness, lack of effective distribution and expectations that come with brand recognition also has an important role.

Harley Davidson, staged a comeback in the US, by infusing back into the brand what a typical Harley stood for. Harley could not compete against Japanese motor cycles which were lighter and embodied new technology. So Harley decided against becoming like the Japanese in its models, advertising and selling. Instead it went back to its 'roots'. By restoring Harley Davidson's proud image and creating demand for its motorcycles, it has been a cherished symbol of rugged American individuality and personal freedom. It had always been more about its users than motor cycles. But, for some time, propelled by the Japanese assault, Harley also began to concentrate on the functional side of a bike, liked the Japanese. This alienated typical Harley buyers. With a renewed focus on what Harley symbolized, it staged an impressive come back.

Conclusion

Brand revitalization plays a major role in doing so. But firms should do intensive research before taking the decision for revitalization of brands by measuring the brands through suitable tools. . It all depends on the nature and characteristic of the brand and also its marketing environment. They should then select the best possible procedure for their brand for successful

revitalization. The review of various case studies of brands pertaining to revitalization has shown that how brands have revitalized successfully. Different ways of brand revival are expanding the brand awareness, improving the brand image, brand extension, brand repositioning, product range extension and strengthening the distribution. A carefully executed brand revitalization strategy ensures that the brand life cycle gets extended.

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