

Brand Identity Development and the Role of Marketing Communications: Brand Experts' View

Nusa Petek
Maja Konecnik Ruzzier

Recently academics outlined the importance of brand relationships and brand experiences as building blocks of brand identities. New marketing communication tools, which enable interactions and consumer engagement, are among the most important tools mentioned for strengthening brand relationships and enhancing brand experiences by academics. Therefore the paper analyses the understanding of brand identity building blocks by brand experts and their usage of new marketing communication tools. Twelve in-depth interviews have been conducted among brand experts in Slovenia. Our findings imply that brand experts' knowledge about brand identity is not consistent with the newest brand identity conceptualizations, by not considering brand relationships and brand experiences as building blocks of brand identity. Even if new marketing communications have been adapted to the great extent, traditional marketing communication tools still prevail and therefore new marketing communication tools, especially mobile advertising is in majority still in its infancy.

Key Words: brand; brand identity; brand experts; marketing communications; Slovenia

JEL Classification: M310; M370

Introduction

In recent decades, branding has developed into the most dominant topic in marketing studies. According to the modern approach in branding academics study brands from the internal and external stakeholder perspective (de Chernatony and Harris 2000; Konecnik Ruzzier and Ruzzier 2009). On this basis a two-dimensional approach to branding became evident in the literature (Konecnik and Gartner 2007; Konecnik, Ruzzier,

Nusa Petek is Assistant at the Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Dr Maja Konecnik Ruzzier is Associated Professor at the Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Managing Global Transitions 11 (1): 61–78

and Ruzzier 2009; de Chernatony 2010) where on the one side the emphasis is centred on internal stakeholders and brand identity development (Kapferer 1997; de Chernatony 1999; Konecnik Ruzzier and Ruzzier 2009) and on the other side on external stakeholders and brand equity development (Keller 1993; Aaker 1996). From the internal stakeholder point of view researchers' aim is to define the process of brand identity building (Kapferer 1997; Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000). Brand identity represents what the company wants the brand to stand for and is the driver for all brand-building efforts (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000). Therefore academics emphasise that brand identity should present a starting point for any brand building (Kapferer 1997; Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000). Consequently the focus in the paper will be predominately based on brand identity view.

Also the connections among the constructs of brand identity and brand equity should be taken into consideration. Due to the belief of academics all marketing mix elements have an impact on brand equity (Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000; Heinonen and Strandvik 2005). Nevertheless, numerous academics outlined the crucial role of marketing communications in the brand building process (Madhavaram, Badrinarayanan, and McDonald 2005; Luo and Donthu 2006; Keller 2009). Marketing communications will present a second focal part in the paper since in the last decade they changed dramatically due to the emergence of information and communications technology (hereinafter: ICT) and the rise in the use of internet as a new medium (Winer 2009). There are immense differences in the combination of diverse marketing communication tools that are nowadays available to marketers. Moreover marketing communications nowadays travel in many directions and marketers cannot control them as easily as in the past (Winer 2009; Keller 2009).

Changes in the marketplace opened up numerous new research topics in marketing, where branding and marketing communications have one of the leading roles. The outlined topic is of a huge importance to scientific marketing research worldwide, which is evident also in Marketing Science Institute (2010) research priorities for the period from 2010 to 2012, where two among eight research priority topics outlined the importance of changes in marketing communications and the challenge of managing brands in the new, transformed marketplace. Therefore the aim of the paper is to examine and compare how the concept of brand identity is understood both in scientific papers and in practice. Furthermore we want also to reveal brand experts' opinions of new marketing communi-

cation tools and their views of future trends in marketing communications.

Brand Identity

Alike to initial brand definitions, which equated brands with visual elements (de Chernatony and McDonald 1992), also the earliest brand identity classifications equated brand identity with visual identity (van Riel and Balmer 1997). Even though visual identity has a huge importance in brand building, it represents only one component among all other elements that form brand identity (van Riel and Balmer 1997; de Chernatony 2010). The brand iceberg represents the recent view in brand identity theory, separating brand identity to its visible and invisible part, where the invisible part is gaining in importance (Davidson 1997).

Due to the vast importance of the topic there have been proposed several building blocks of brand identity, where the most focused on building blocks of corporate brand identity (Melewar 1993; van Riel and Balmer 1997). Furthermore academics focused mainly on product (Kapferer 1997; Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000; de Chernatony 2010) or service (Kapferer 1997; Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000; Jones 2000) brands and only a few on other brand types, like destination brands (Balakrishnan 2009; Konecnik Ruzzier and de Chernatony 2013). The comprehensive review of brand identity building blocks is presented in table 1. Brand identity building blocks differ greatly among authors, since they all together propose 42 building blocks of brand identity.

Mostly cited brand identity models are those of Ind (1997), Kapferer (1997), Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) and de Chernatony (1999), which emerged already a decade ago but are still highly used nowadays by both academics and practitioners. Nevertheless, due to our belief Konecnik Ruzzier and de Chernatony (2013) present the most comprehensive conceptualization of brand identity, since they stress the vast importance of all key stakeholders who define, live and implement the brand. Furthermore, they are the only authors who expose experiences as an integral part of brand identity. Their brand identity understanding could be therefore with some minor adjustments used for developing brand identity of all brand types, not only country brands, as proposed in their paper.

On the basis of the reviewed literature presented in table 1 we propose a new set of brand identity building blocks, which includes elements, proposed by the majority of authors. Proposed brand identity building blocks are vision, mission, values, personality and core competencies which are

TABLE 1 Brand identity building blocks

Author(s)	Brand identity building blocks	Model's name
Melewar 1993	Communications, design, culture (values, philosophy, mission, principles, country-of-origin, guidelines, history, founder, subculture), behaviour, structure, industry identity, strategy	Corporate identity
van Riel and Balmer 1997	Personality, behaviour, communication, symbolism	Corporate identity programme
Aaker 1996; Aaker and Joachimsthaller 2000	Brand as product, organization, person and symbol, value and benefits, credibility and relationships	Brand identity system
Kapferer 1997	Physique, personality, culture, customers' self-projection, customers' reflection, relationships	Brand identity prism
Ind 1997	Mission, philosophy, values, culture	Strategic corporate identity
de Chernatony 1999	Vision, culture, relationships, positioning, personality, presentation	Brand identity model
de Chernatony and Harris 2000	Vision, culture, positioning, personality, relationships, presentation	Brand identity
Jones 2000	Beliefs, capabilities, behaviours, environment	Brand identity triangle
Melewar and Jenkins 2002	Communication and visual identity, behaviour, corporate culture, market conditions	Corporate identity
Melewar and Karaosmanoglu 2006	Structure, design, strategy (positioning and differentiation), culture (mission, vision, values), behaviour, communications, industry identity	Corporate identity
Balakrishnan 2009	Vision, stakeholder management, customer targeting, positioning or differentiation, brand components, communication strategy	Branding strategy
de Chernatony 2010	Positioning, culture and vision, personality, presentation, relationships	Brand identity components
Konecnik Ruzzier and de Chernatony 2013	Benefits, mission, vision, values, distinguishing preferences, personality, experiential promise, emotional value, functional value, stakeholders	Destination brand identity model

evident in the most reviewed brand identity models. *Vision* represents the reason for the brand's existence and embodies its core values (Collins and Porras 1996). *Mission* is seen as the most essential element of brands' philosophy (Abratt 1989; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu 2006). Values should communicate functional, emotional or self-expressive benefits in order

to provide value and build brand-stakeholder relationships (Aaker 1996, 95–100). On the other side *personality* of a brand is a set of human traits associated with brands (Azoulay and Kapferer 2003, 151). Brand personality enables brands to build relationships with people that possess the same personality characteristics and therefore presents the basis for brand-consumer relationships (Aaker 1996, 84). *Core competencies* are strong, favourable and unique brand attributes or associations. They ought to be derived from the brand's vision and values (de Chernatony 1999).

Since both functional and emotional values enable stakeholders to recognize a promised brand experience (Christodoulides and de Chernatony 2004) we believe *brand experience* should be also incorporated into brand identity. Given that brands nowadays are no longer perceived as social objects but are socially constructed with consumer participation (Merrilees and Fry 2002), the main emphasis should be also devoted to building *brand relationships* (Fournier 1998; de Chernatony and Christodoulides 2004). The recent belief is that what defines brand identity are experiential promise and unique relationships among the brand and its stakeholders (de Chernatony and Christodoulides 2004; da Silva and Alwi 2008; Konecnik, Ruzzier, and de Chernatony 2013). Stakeholders are nowadays regarded not only as co-creators of brand experiences and relationships but should also contribute to brand identity creation. Consequently we believe experiential promise and relationships should be also considered as brand identity building blocks. Our proposed brand identity model therefore consists of brand vision, mission, values, personality, core competencies, experiences and relationships. Furthermore, as emphasised in the recent branding literature the brand should be communicated not only through visual elements, but also through brand story written for each key stakeholder group (Scott 1994; Barker and Gower 2010).

The Importance of Marketing Communication in Building Strong Brands

Communications are in general perceived as an activity that links people together and creates relationships (Duncan and Moriarty 1998). All brands' activities are believed to have a communication dimension (Duncan and Moriarty 1998; Heinonen and Strandvik 2005). Nevertheless, marketing communications are seen as a brands' 'voice' (Keller 2009) and are therefore perceived as a crucial strategic tool for building brands (Keller 1993; Naik and Raman 2003). Academics stress out that mar-



FIGURE 1 The role of marketing communication in two dimensional branding

keting communications contribute to brand building if they are based on unique brand identity (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000; de Chernatony 1999). The idea that marketing communications contribute to brand building was first presented in 1960s, when Joyce (1967) postulated the theory that advertising changes attitudes towards brands through the AIDA model (Argyriou, Kitchen, and Melewar 2005, 580). After that numerous theoretic models emerged in order to explain the impact of marketing communications on brands (Vakratsas and Ambler 1999). However, nowadays-marketing communications are believed to contribute to building high customer-based brand equity (Vakratsas and Ambler 1999; Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000). In figure 1 we present above presented process from brand identity development to brand equity building via marketing communications.

Traditionally brand experts could communicate with external stakeholders only by using mass communication approach, where communications travelled only from the company to the market (Keller 2010; Kumar 2010). Most of the attention was focused on TV advertising (Keller 1993; Aaker 1996). Nowadays-mass communications approach suddenly became a thing of the past. Communications are believed to be travelling in four diverse directions; among the brand and external stakeholders, among external stakeholders, among internal and external stakeholders and among brand and internal stakeholders. These communications are forming diverse interactions and diverse relationships (Keller 2009, 152). One of the biggest challenges in this new environment is how to manage diverse marketing communication options, since marketers cannot fully control them.

If we focus only on two marketing communication tools, advertising and word-of-mouth marketing, which are acknowledged to be the ones that have the biggest influence on brand equity, we can already see there have been many changes due to ICT (Ilfeld and Winer 2002). Advertising which was in the past communicated through four traditional mediums; television, radio, magazines, newspapers and outdoor, is nowadays referred as traditional advertising (Yoon and Kim 2001; Trusov, Buck-

lin, and Pauwels 2009). In the digital era new advertising mediums appeared; Internet and mobile phones and consequently online and mobile advertising emerged. Also traditional advertising mediums are changing, especially television advertising, which is with its additional functionalities becoming more and more adjusted to the digital era. Furthermore, word-of-mouth marketing, which was in the past only in the domain of consumers, in recent years occurred as a planned marketing communications activity and can be defined as the planned act of influencing consumer to consumer communications by engaging special word-of-mouth (hereinafter: WOM) marketing techniques, such as viral marketing, guerrilla marketing, buzz marketing or social media marketing (Kozinets et al. 2010). WOM in digital environments, named electronic word-of-mouth (hereinafter: eWOM) occurs in numerous online platforms like blogs, emails, consumer review websites, forums, virtual communities and social networking sites (Dwyer 2007; Chu and Kim 2011). eWOM represents a powerful tool, since it allows marketers to reach, listen and talk to consumers in order to gain better understanding about their needs, wants and purchase behaviour.

Research Methodology

In order to confirm proposed building blocks of brand identity and explore whether the opinion about the development in marketing communications is the same as proposed in the literature review, we took a qualitative approach, since it allows approaching complex phenomena in a systematic way (Gummesson 2005). In-depth interviews were used in order to capture understanding of brand experts about the topic. We considered brand experts' opinions to be the most appropriate for the interviews since they are the ones who deal with brands on a daily basis and also have the overall view about all brands' activities. All together there were twelve brand experts interviewed; among them five were entitled brand managers and seven marketing directors. In order that brand experts qualified into the sample, they should be frequently presented in marketing conferences as speakers or members of committee boards or should be at least mentioned in media several times regarding brand management of focal brands. Moreover we chose different brand profiles since we wanted to include diverse brand types and also brands with diverse market orientation. Respondent profiles are presented in table 2.

Interviews were semi-structured, tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed. Interviews lasted from 50 minutes to one hour and a half.

TABLE 2
Respondent profile

Category	Nr. of brand experts
<i>Title</i>	
Brand manager	5
Marketing director	7
<i>Organizations' market orientation</i>	
Global	5
Central and East European market	5
Only local	2
<i>Managed brand type</i>	
Low-involvement product brand	4
High-involvement product brand	3
Service brand	5
Destination brand	1

Content analysis was carried out. Content analysis seemed the most appropriate method for our analysis since it is usually based on specific research questions formed on the basis of the literature review (Carson et al. 2001; Harwood and Garry 2003).

Research Results

BRAND IDENTITY UNDERSTANDING

In the first part we wanted to find out how brand experts understand concept of brand identity, whether they use some other name for the same concept and what they regard as its building blocks. They were furthermore also asked to present identity of their own brand. We found out that the majority of brand experts use the concept of brand identity. Nevertheless, some of them use different names for the same concept, like brand essence, brand style, brand core and brand idea. Brand experts described what means brand identity with diverse descriptions but nevertheless they agree brand identity is the brand's core, its rules of behaviour, its distinguishing characteristics compared to other brands and the whole physical and emotional part attached to a product or other entity. In the words of one brand expert: 'I believe a concept of brand identity is similar to the concept of human identity. We like to talk or it is good when we talk about brands and all their identity characteristics in a manner of getting to know it and what identifies it.' Furthermore most of brand experts emphasised that brand identity is in their hands and they have

to 'write the rules' for the brand and its presence not only on the marketplace among external public but also among its internal stakeholders. They warned that all brands' activities should be connected in order to build a successful brand and also that in the end consumers are the ones who have a major role in deciding whether the brand will succeed on the marketplace or not.

All interviewed brand experts exposed brand identity consists of several building blocks. In the words of one brand expert: 'It is about the whole concept, about the author behind it, who transfers its identity to the brand.' Other brand expert stressed out that they consider whole marketing mix in order to define brand identity. From the review of all interviews there were all together 44 different building blocks of brand identity mentioned. Visual identity was outlined most of times, followed by brand characteristics and values, which were outlined by majority of interviewees as one of the main building blocks of brand's identity. After values interviewees considered also communications and feelings as an important part of brands' identity, which were followed by vision, value, name and logo. Symbols, sales, promise, positioning, personality, emotions and colour were stressed out only a few times. Other proposed building blocks were also strategy, senses, mission, meanings, functional and emotional characteristics, facts, associations, advertising, wish, understanding, tradition, style, story, smells, slogan, responsibility, reasons, products, presentation, philosophy, people, image, expressions, character, benefits, attributes and activities.

In view of brand experts views we propose:

- P1 *Alike to diverse brand identity conceptualizations in scientific papers there is also not a single brand identity conceptualization evident in practice.*
- P2 *Brand experts' knowledge about brand identity is consistent with the traditional brand identity literature; whether the newest brand identity conceptualizations are not yet well known among brand experts.*

THE ROLE OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AND THEIR USAGE

In the second part we wanted to find out if brand experts believe marketing communications mix changed due to development of ICT. Moreover we asked them what they believe are the trends in marketing communications. Furthermore we focused on their brands and their usage of online and mobile advertising and ewoM.

The majority of brand experts confirmed marketing communications mix has changed dramatically, where only a few stressed out it did not change a lot. Especially the role of Internet was outlined and its ability of allowing communicating with external public 24 hours per day. They mentioned also interactivity, two-way communication and user-generated content as the most drastic changes. But nevertheless, one of the respondents emphasised that we cannot consider Internet or social networking sites as something new on the market and that maybe the newest thing are the Smartphones. Respondents also warned about the special characteristics of the Slovene advertising environment, where television advertising has still the most crucial role due to its mass coverage. Many of them also outlined that print advertising witnessed the most dramatic drop among all media, which is being replaced by Internet and new devices, such as tablet computers.

Regarding trends in marketing communications in Slovenia the majority outlined the future is in digital media. They believe that newspapers and magazines will not be in the same form in the future as they are now. As one brand manager explained: 'Also traditional mediums will adapt to changes, since we cannot talk anymore about traditional media, these are evolving, adapting to the consumers' needs.' Even though most of respondents emphasised that television advertising will still remain in the number one position, they believe it will have to change. Not only there will have to be less saturation of advertisements which are in today's form by their belief irritating not only for consumers but also for advertisers, since advertising blocks are becoming too long, but also television will have to adapt to other platforms. With the words of one brand manager: 'I believe that 5 to 10 years from now television and Internet will be the same appliance.' Brand experts also emphasised that virtual world can still not replace exact experience in the physical environment and that therefore marketers will have to find the right combination of traditional and new media. As one of the future trends several brand experts outlined also smaller target groups and consequently the highest needs for segmentation.

Furthermore majority of brand experts emphasised they do not believe mobile and online advertising will overtake television advertising, even though they acknowledged that the ratio among new and traditional advertising has changed in recent years, in benefit of new media. Several emphasised that also on more developed markets television remains the number one. Nevertheless, as one brand manager outlined: 'There is

the higher wish for digital communications in less developed markets, in Slovenia most of people are already cheesed with it.' Moreover another brand manager stressed out his concern about mobile advertising claiming that he is not sure whether mobile advertising will really succeed. One brand manager outlined the importance of brands in this new environment, stating: 'Brands are becoming more and more important in this new media world, not the platforms.'

Brand experts were furthermore asked how often they advertise their brands online. Most advertise online all the time and a few advertise just when they have some novelties. Only one brand expert said they do not advertise online. Most of included brands are advertised in social networking sites, followed by banners, own web pages, prize winning games, Google AD words and public relations articles. Minority outlined also advertising in forums, games, double recall ads and blogs. Several brand experts outlined that the age of traditional banners is over and that they are trying to use more innovative or creative banners, like for example backgrounds.

Furthermore we wanted to find out how brand experts define the term ewom. Majority of them outlined they understand the term like sharing information in an online environment. Quite a few considered Facebook as the most representative tool of ewom. When we asked them which ewom tools they use regularly majority mentioned Facebook, which was followed by other social networking sites, forums and blogs. We also asked them whether they measure the effectiveness and efficiency of their ewom campaigns and how. In majority brand experts outlined they do measure the effectiveness and efficiency of ewom campaigns. Most of them use Facebook analytic tools, not only for counting the number of fans and comments but they use also other indicators. Only few brand experts outlined they do not measure their ewom campaigns with any indicator. One brand expert outlined they are using Google analytic tools and the other they are using the netnographic method. About netnography brand expert outlined: 'We make a netnographic method once in a while in order to find out if the doctrines that we are advocating are also the doctrines that consumers adopt as their own. Whether we find out that consumers changed these doctrines a little bit and our products do not fulfil their needs it can happen that we have to adapt the whole assortment to consumers needs.'

Regarding their brands' presence on mobile phones majority of brand experts outlined they are present there with their web page, but this page

is not adapted to diverse mobile platforms. The minority outlined they have adapted their web pages to different platforms of Smartphones. Nevertheless, a few emphasised that they are developing their mobile web pages for diverse platforms at the moment. On the topic of mobile advertising several brand experts emphasised they use SMS clubs and mobile applications. These are followed by QR codes, sales promotions, games, advertising in other mobile applications and SMS voting. Only one brand manager outlined they do not use mobile advertising. All brand experts stressed out they acquire consumer permission before sending any mobile advertisement.

Based on the outlined findings we posit:

- P3 *Trends in marketing communication tools are in the need for adapting traditional marketing communications tools to diverse platforms.*
- P4 *The focal role in Slovene marketing communications is still centred on the traditional marketing communication tools, especially television advertising.*
- P4 *Even though mobile and online advertising and eWOM represent the future in marketing communications, they will not overtake television advertising.*

Discussion

In-depth interviews with brand experts revealed they are very familiar with the concept of brand identity, even though some of them use other name to define the concept. All of them emphasised there are two sides of identity, the one that is communicated through visual identity elements, and the other communicating brands' invisible characteristics. Even though numerous brand identity building blocks were mentioned we can divide them into sets of building blocks, which are embodied also in our proposed brand identity model consisting of vision, mission, values, personality, core competencies, experiences and relationships along with visual identity and brand story. Vision was mentioned several times, while also strategy can be considered as a part of the brands vision. Mission was outlined fewer times, but nevertheless also wish and philosophy can be considered as a part of brands' mission. Values were outlined by majority of brand experts as one of the most important brand identity building block confirming it as an integral part of our proposed model. Along personality, which was stressed out by a few brand experts, we can also count characteristics, which were mentioned by majority and also character, which was stressed by one brand expert. Core competencies

were outlined via positioning, associations, attributes, facts and reasons. Brand experience was not mentioned but nevertheless senses and smells, as one of the building blocks of describing brand experience have been outlined. Only relationships were not mentioned by any brand expert. Nevertheless the importance of people as part of brand identity was outlined once. While visual brand identity elements were stressed by majority of brand experts, brand story was outlined only once.

There were furthermore several other brand identity building blocks stressed out where we could divide them into two categories. Communications, sales and advertising can be considered as a part of marketing mix and brands' value, image and its understanding as brand equity from the external stakeholders' view. From the outlined elements we can confirm proposed brand identity model. Only brand relationships were not outlined by any brand manager as building blocks of brand identity but as already noted the importance of people concerning brand identity was outlined.

All brand experts believe ICT is changing the way of communicating their brands. Nevertheless, they are sceptic that these new mediums, such as social networking sites and Smartphones will prevail, compared to television, which is still regarded as the most efficient and effective tool for brand building. Therefore they believe that even though marketing communications mix has changed dramatically, the traditional media will not become extinct, but it will have to adapt to diverse platforms. Nevertheless, online advertising, especially in social networking sites and with online banners is widespread and also followed by measurements of their effectiveness and efficiency. Furthermore, brand experts use in majority measuring techniques provided by online corporations like Google or Facebook, which are of a quantitative nature. Only one brand manager outlined they are using netnography, a technique of a qualitative research on the web, which is used broadly in more developed markets (Kozinets 2002). Moreover, mobile advertising is still not as developed as it is evident from the current literature. Even though brand experts use mobile advertising, they outlined their concern about its efficiency and effectiveness, especially due to low ownership of Smartphones in Slovenia. But nevertheless, they see the future development especially in this media.

Conclusions

In-depth interviews revealed that brand experts in Slovenia, regardless of their brands' market orientation and brand type follow the recent changes in the environment and they are in majority adapting to them.

They are aware even more than ever that branding is becoming crucially important. Considering brand identity concept, several authors (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000; Balakrishnan 2009; Konecnik, Ruzzier, and de Chernatony 2013) emphasized the role of people that form relationships with brands and brand experiences, but were not mentioned by any respondent. Therefore we believe brand experts' knowledge about brand identity is consistent with traditionally highly cited brand identity literature; whether the newest brand identity conceptualizations, like the inclusion of brand experiences, brand relationships and brand story are not yet well-known or used among them. The incorporation of brand relationships and brand experiences into brands identity are among the novelties emerging in the recent scientific articles, which is in majority connected with the most developed markets and therefore adapted by the most developed business practices. Our projections are that highlighted concepts will become one of the leading concepts in the future also in Slovene marketing sphere, especially among brands marketed internationally.

We believe brand experts should strive to develop their online and mobile advertising campaigns in a way of involving their consumers inside the messages as they are already trying to do with eWOM. Only by engaging consumers into the brands' messages brand experts can experience the true advantages of new marketing communication tools. To conclude new marketing communication tools can enhance consumer engagement with brands due to two-way interactions among the brand and consumers. The most successful brands in the future will use this advantage and conquer consumers' minds and hearts. In order to succeed they should rewrite their brand identities and include brand experiences and brand relationships as the brands' core. The ones that will not adapt to these challenges now, will lose their consumers in the near future.

To conclude, we would also like to emphasise some limitations of this research. In-depth interviews have been made with brand experts, coming from real organizations. Some authors (Freeling 1994; de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley 1998) criticise the inclusion of brand managers and marketing directors in the studies, since they are believed to be lacking a long-term vision and propose brand consultants instead. Furthermore, there were 12 brand experts interviewed, which does not follow Gordon and Langmaid's (1998) proposition about the sample size of 20 brand experts for in-depth interviews. Nevertheless, we believe that our study

will help especially brand experts working in organizations to reconsider about their brands and marketing communication practice.

Finally, this paper identifies the gap between brand identity understanding in the emerging branding theory and practice. The gap is evident also in the use of new marketing communication tools as presented in the recent scientific papers and its use in practice. Therefore we believe further research should focus on reasons, why the new marketing communication tools are not as popular as one might think they are. Moreover, the comparison among brand experts understanding of building blocks of brand identity and the usage of new marketing communication tools in diverse markets would be a very important topic for further examinations.

References

- Aaker, D. A. 1996. *Building Strong Brands*. New York: The Free Press.
- Aaker, D. A., and E. Joachimsthaler. 2000. *Brand Leadership*. New York: The Free Press.
- Abratt, R. 1989. 'A New Approach to the Corporate Image Management Process.' *Journal of Marketing Management* 5 (1): 63–76.
- Argyriou, E., Kitchen, P. J., and T. C. Melewar. 2005. 'The Relationship Between Corporate Websites and Brand Equity: A Conceptual Framework and Research Agenda.' *International Journal of Market Research* 48 (5): 575–99.
- Azoulay, A., and J. N. Kapferer. 2003. 'Do Brand Personality Scales Really Measure Brand Personality?' *Journal of Brand Management* 11 (2): 143–55.
- Balakrishnan, M. S. 2009. 'Strategic Brand of Destinations: A Framework.' *European Journal of Marketing* 43 (5–6): 611–29.
- Barker, R. T., and K. Gower. 2010. 'Strategic Application of Storytelling in Organizations.' *Journal of Business Communication* 47 (3): 295–312.
- Carson, D., Gilmore, A., Perry, C., and K. Gronhaug. 2001. *Qualitative Marketing Research*. London: Sage.
- Christodoulides, G., and L. de Chernatony. 2004. 'Dimensionalising On- and Offline Brands' Composite Equity.' *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 13 (3): 168–79.
- Chu, S. C., and Y. Kim. 2011. 'Determinants of Consumer Engagement in Electronic Word-of-Mouth (ewOM) in Social Networking Sites.' *International Journal of Advertising* 30 (1): 47–75.
- Collins, J. C., and J. I. Porras. 1996. 'Building Your Company's Vision.' *Harvard Business Review* 74 (5): 65–77.

- da Silva, R. V., and S. Alwi 2008. 'Online Brand Attributes and Online Corporate Brand Images.' *European Journal of Marketing* 42 (9–10): 1039–58.
- Davidson, H. 1997. *Even More Offensive Marketing*. London: Penguin.
- de Chernatony, L. 1999. 'Brand Management through Narrowing the Gap between Brand Identity and Brand Reputation.' *Journal of Marketing Management* 15 (1–3): 157–79.
- . 2010. *From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- de Chernatony, L., and G. Christodoulides. 2004. 'Taking the Brand Promise Online: Challenges and Opportunities.' *Interactive Marketing* 5 (3): 238–51.
- de Chernatony, L., and F. Dall'Olmo Riley. 1998. 'Modelling the Components of the Brand.' *European Journal of Marketing* 32 (11): 1074–90.
- de Chernatony, L., and F. Harris. 2000. 'Developing Corporate Brands through Considering Internal and External Stakeholders.' *Corporate Reputation Review* 3 (3): 268–74.
- de Chernatony, L., and M. H. B. McDonald. 2001. *Creating Powerful Brands in Consumer, Service and Industrial Markets*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Duncan, T., and S. E. Moriarty. 1998. 'A Communication-Based Marketing Model for Managing Customer Relationships.' *Journal of Marketing* 62 (2): 1–14.
- Dwyer, P. 2007. 'Measuring the Value of Electronic Word of Mouth and Its Impact in Consumer Communities.' *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 21 (2): 63–79.
- Fournier, S. 1998. 'Consumers and Their Brands: Developing Relationship Theory in Consumer Research.' *Journal of Consumer Research* 24 (4): 343–73.
- Freeling, A. 1994. 'Marketing Is in Crisis – Can Market Research Help?' *Journal of the Market Research Society* 36 (2): 97–104.
- Gordon, W., and R. Langmaid. 1988. *Qualitative Market Research*. Gower: Aldershot.
- Gummesson, E. 2005. 'Qualitative Research in Marketing.' *European Journal of Marketing* 39 (3–4): 309–27.
- Harwood, T. G., and T. Garry. 2003. 'An Overview of Content Analysis.' *The Marketing Review* 3 (4): 479–98.
- Heinonen, K., and T. Strandvik. 2005. 'Communication as an Element of Service Value.' *International Journal of Service Industry Management* 16 (2): 186–98.
- Ilfeld, J. S., and R. S. Winner. 2002. 'Generating Website Traffic.' *Journal of Advertising Research* 42 (5): 49–61.

- Ind, N. 1997. *The Corporate Brand*. London: Macmillan Business.
- Jones, J. 2000. 'How do You Understand a Financial Services Brand?' Paper presented at Branding in the Financial Services Industry conference, London, 13 July.
- Kapferer, J. N. 1997. *Strategic Brand Management: Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term*. 2nd ed. London: Kogan Page.
- Keller, K. L. 1993. 'Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity.' *Journal of Marketing* 57 (1): 1–22.
- . 2009. 'Building Strong Brands in a Modern Marketing Communication Environment.' *Journal of Marketing Communications* 15 (2–3): 139–55.
- . 2010. 'Brand Equity Management in a Multichannel, Multimedia, Retail Environment.' *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 24 (2): 58–70.
- Konečnik, M., and W. C. Gartner. 2007. 'Customer-Based Brand Equity for a Destination.' *Annals of Tourism Research* 34 (2): 400–21.
- Konečnik Ruzzier, M., and L. de Chernatony. 2013. 'Developing and Applying a Place Brand Identity Model: The Case of Slovenia.' *Journal of Business Research* 66 (1): 45–52.
- Konečnik Ruzzier, M., and M. Ruzzier. 2009. 'A Two-Dimensional Approach to Branding: Integrating Identity and Equity.' In *Tourism Branding: Communities in Action*, edited by L. A. Cai, W. C. Gartner, and A. M. Munar, 65–73. Bingley: Emerald.
- Kozinets, R. 2002. 'The Field Behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities.' *Journal of Marketing Research* 39 (1): 61–72.
- Kozinets, R., K. de Valck, A. C. Wojnicki, and S. J. S. Wilner. 2010. 'Networked Narratives: Understanding World-of-Mouth Marketing in Online Communities.' *Journal of Marketing* 74:71–89.
- Kumar, V. 2010. 'A Customer Lifetime Value-Based Approach to Marketing in the Multichannel, Multimedia Retailing Environment.' *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 24 (2): 71–85.
- Luo, X., and N. Donthu. 2006. 'Marketing's Credibility: A Longitudinal Study of Marketing Communication Productivity (MCP) and Shareholder Value.' *Journal of Marketing* 70 (4): 70–91.
- Madhavaram, S., V. Badrinarayanan, and R. E. McDonald. 2005. 'Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and Brand Identity as Critical Components of Brand Equity Strategy.' *Journal of Advertising* 34 (4): 69–80.
- Marketing Science Institute. 2010. *2010–2012 Research Priorities*. Cambridge, MA: Marketing Science Institute.
- Melewar, T. C. 1993. 'Determinants of the Corporate Identity Concept.' *Journal of Marketing Communications* 9 (4): 195–220.

- Melewar, T. C., and E. Jenkins. 2002. 'Defining the Corporate Identity Construct.' *Corporate Reputation Review* 5 (1): 76–90.
- Melewar, T. C., and E. Karaosmanoglu. 2006. 'Seven Dimensions of Corporate Identity: A Categorisation from the Practitioners' Perspectives.' *European Journal of Marketing* 40 (7–8): 846–69.
- Merrilees, B., and M. L. Fry. 2002. 'Corporate Branding: A Framework for E-retailers.' *Corporate Reputation Review* 5 (2–3): 213–25.
- Naik, A. P., and K. Raman. 2003. 'Understanding the Impact of Synergy in Multimedia Communications.' *Journal of Marketing Research* 40 (4):375–88.
- Scott, L. M. 1994. 'The Bridge from Text to Mind: Adapting Reader-Response Theory to Consumer Research.' *Journal of Consumer Research* 21 (3): 461–80.
- Trusov, M., Bucklin, R. E., and K. Pauwels. 2009. 'Effects of Word-of-Mouth Versus Traditional Marketing: Findings from an Internet Social Networking Site.' *Journal of Marketing* 73 (5): 90–102.
- Vakratsas, D., and T. Ambler. 1999. 'How Advertising Works: Do We Really Know?' *Journal of Marketing* 63:26–43.
- van Riel, C. B. M., and J. Balmer. 1997. 'Corporate Identity: The Concept, Its Measurement and Management.' *European Journal of Marketing* 31 (5–6): 340–55.
- Winer, S. R. 2009. 'New Communications Approaches in Marketing: Issues and Research Directions.' *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 23 (2): 108–17.
- Yoo, B., Donthu, N., and S. Lee. 2000. 'An Examination of Selected Marketing Mix Elements and Brand Equity.' *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 28 (2): 195–211.
- Yoon, S. J., and J. H. Kim. 2001. 'Is the Internet More Effective Than Traditional Media? Factors Affecting the Choice of Media.' *Journal of Advertising Research* 41 (6): 53–60.