

Chapter 27

Branding and Mobile: Revolutionizing Strategies

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ABSTRACT

An overview of mobile's impact on branding strategy expands from discussion of chronological ages of branding to mobile's effects on the brand management function. The latter are structured around four steps of the brand management process, including planning and brand positioning, implementing branding strategies, measuring and analyzing performance of a brand, and sustaining brand equity over time and across geographic markets. With a focus on cross-platform branding and establishment of seamless mobile experience, the chapter explores various aspects of mobile's influence on branding. A strategic view on the mobile-first approach that permeates all aspects of the branding process from logo design to brand equity measurement is accompanied with real-life applications. Best practices illustrate changing perspectives in branding and include examples of how new technologies like iBeacon and augmented reality are used by leading brands. Examples are drawn from recent academic and industry studies in business and management with links to classic brand management literature.

INTRODUCTION

Never before has media been as fragmented as now. Internet users around the globe have on average 3.6 devices that they are constantly switching (TNS Global, 2014), and 36% of total time using all those devices is spent on mobile (Sinton, 2014). With almost two-thirds of mobile users worldwide using their second screens (smartphones or tablets) while watching TV (Statista, 2015), it is more difficult to repeat Apple's early success with its only-once-aired-on-national-television "1984" commercial that immediately received unprecedented publicity and skyrocketed the Macintosh sales.

Brand managers need to integrate another essential dimension into their current branding strategies, and this dimension is *mobile*. From Burberry's virtual kisses to the augmented reality of the movie Ice

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Age, global brands are actively embracing mobile opportunities. They know that if they are unable to integrate mobile into the flowing cross-platform experience, they risk being thrashed by faster and more mobile-oriented competitors.

In order to avoid overlapping with the chapter on mobile marketing and advertising, this chapter will take a more strategic stance and will specifically focus on implications of the mobile revolution on strategic brand management, with brand equity as its central concept.

STATE OF THE ART

In today's world, brands are omnipresent. What started as trademarks on pottery to identify their hand-crafter, brands are now irreplaceable, intangible assets that are worth billions of dollars. Interbrand estimated the monetary value of Apple and Google each in its 2014 annual report as more than \$100 billion (Interbrand, 2014). Brands today have gone far beyond simple trademarks and reside in the minds of consumers rather than on product labels. With the new digital mobile revolution taking place and shifting media consumption habits of consumers, building strong brands has become a challenging task for many companies.

Mobile triggered two fundamental changes. First, it created new markets and companies that couldn't be imagined even 10 years before. Swiping pictures of potential dates left and right (Tinder) or sending photos to friends that automatically disappear after 10 seconds (Snapchat) might have been unimaginable in the end of 1990s but are parts of our daily routine today. Second, mobile introduced new battlefields to existing firms. With mobile Internet surpassing that of desktop computers, companies are pressed to take the mobile-first strategy and m-branding seriously. If the mid-1980s were about the economic value of brands as business assets (Keller, 2013), and the 1990s and 2000s were about the social value of brands and trust building (Clifton & Simmons, 2003), now it goes even deeper to perceptions and seamless consumer experience across different media platforms (Welsbeck & Berney, 2014). In championing this trend, the individualization of the consumer experience plays an increasingly important role. The Adobe Marketer's Guide to Personalization (2013, pp. 2-3) summarizes the essence of this rising trend:

Who doesn't enjoy that feeling of walking into a shop and being recognized, welcomed and treated as an individual? ... Increasingly, customers have come to expect a consistent, personalized service across all touch points: in-store, online, on mobile – wherever and whenever they choose to engage. It's up to you to ensure you are providing your customers with a service that makes them feel welcome. A good personalized web experience is smooth, non-intrusive and relevant to the customer. The information and content they are presented with should meet their needs and encourage them to interact with your site, deepening the engagement. As the customer starts to interact, they generate data that can be used to enhance their experience in future situations and validate the impact of the programs that you put in place. Personalization is the use of data to deliver a relevant and engaging experience to a consumer across channels and devices.

In Adobe's Digital Trends 2015, based on its survey of 6,000 organization executives, the strong plurality of respondents proclaimed "customer experience" as the "single most exciting opportunity" of 2015 (p. 11). About 78% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are trying to differentiate themselves from their competitors through enhanced customer experience (p. 13), and a strong plurality

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