

## Chapter 27

# Branding, Bonding, and a Brand's Reputation: The Pottermore Case

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### ABSTRACT

*Digitalization has brought continuous innovations and changes in market structures, consumer needs, and in types of products and services. In today's digital world, brands prefer establishing one-to-one emotional bonds with their consumers, abandoning traditional marketing methods, and instead, they are on the lookout for new marketing methods in order to ensure a strong reputation so as to promote sales. Punk marketing is one these methods. This chapter studies punk marketing, reputation management, and brand loyalty through the demonstration of a case study analyzing the website for Harry Potter fans: Pottermore.*

### INTRODUCTION

Today's competitive conditions make it hard to attract the attention of consumers and to encourage them to buy things. Consumers want to gain rational benefits and to be emotionally satisfied, as well. Today, brands use new methods apart from the traditional marketing methods in order to establish emotional bonds and manage reputation successfully. One of these methods is punk marketing. Punk marketing is defined as an innovative way of marketing which refuses the traditional ways and is based on the idea of adjustment to fast changes. A literary genre formed within the fantasy literature has now become an important part of the youth today and has led to brand loyalty.

Harry Potter as a worldwide brand, has gained a global audience and has successfully created brand loyalty. Its fan group, which is formed based on the fantasy literature and fantasy movie, has become loyal consumers and has turned a literary piece into one of the most renowned brands in the world. Articles

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-9282-2.ch027

have been written and reviews have been made on Harry Potter before. Cinematographic, theoretical, and consumption-based reviews have been made. The purpose of this study is to analyze the website in terms of the elements of punk marketing, customer bonding in digital environment, creation of brand loyalty and management of reputation management in digital environment.

## **Emotional Marketing**

Analysis of the consumer's buying behavior has shown that, the emotional bond has a significant place in the process of selection decision as being one of the many encouraging and influencing factors. Customer bonding is a concept that doesn't have an exact equivalent in Turkish. While customer bonding means that brands or companies aim to establish cognitive, emotional and a participatory bond with their available consumers it also includes their aim to establish these bonds with their potential prospective customers (Argan and Özcan, 2014, p.53).

The concept of modern consumption has come to the forefront with the meanings the products reflect as well as the benefits they offer through product properties. The human being is not just a body; so designing experiences that can create spiritual satisfaction has become important in order to be able to address to the spirits of the consumers. The properties of hedonist consumption have begun to emerge. In this context, the steps to customer bonding have become a must for consumer experience. As an abstract issue, addressing to the spirit includes fine details. To create a loyal customer, it is necessary to satisfy the spiritual identity.

Customer bonding requires the brand to address to the hearts of the consumers first, then to their minds. The bond the brand establishes with the consumer is an emotional bond. Beyond expression with figures, this is described through studies that are based on facts through emotions. Bonding requires that communication has been initiated between the two parties. At this point, the customer is one side of the communication and the company is the other side. When defining communication strategies, expectations of the company and customers must be identified. It is necessary to decide which message exactly to give which target group. The steps between the starting point and the final point must be identified. All the steps identified must have the aim of establishing an emotional bond. For example, when the first step is identified as being trustworthy, the final step must introduce the type of emotional bond to be designed through points like getting integrated with the company (Melikoğlu, 2016).

In order to establish an emotional bond, the target group to be addressed to must be determined first. Performing a profound analysis of the target audience is the key element in establishing the bond mentioned here. To address to the human spirit, it must first be identified which areas the human spirit needs at what level and marketing strategies must be determined by receiving support from psychological fields based on the principles of science. Customer bonding must be based a relationship, must be determined with customer experiences created by customer-oriented activities and definitions must be made on the momentum and potential of success.

Customer bonding has been defined in different ways by researchers. Firstly; it was defined as a qualified user experience formed by the combination of focused attention, strength, originality, aesthetics and perceived loyalty an action that affects the users emotionally and a ready to operate situation that directly interacts with the system. Customer bonding can be studied with respect to 4 basic factors. The concentration and devotion to a brand are considered to be the cognitive dimension; whereas conditions such as commitment and a sense of belonging are defined as the emotional dimension. The two-way interaction with the customer can be considered to be the behavioral dimension. In another definition,

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