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Branding and Control Activities for Differentiating Generic Products

A study of 30 brands' most common activities

*Master's Thesis in the Master's Programme
Entrepreneurship and Business Design*

ERICA DAHLGREN NURMAN

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ERICA DAHLGREN NURMAN

Tutor, Chalmers: Bowman Heiden
Tutor, B&L: Joel Borg

Department of Technology Management and Economics
Division of Entrepreneurship and Strategy
CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
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Department of Technology Management and Economics
Division of Entrepreneurship and Strategy
Chalmers University of Technology
SE-412 96 Gothenburg, Sweden
Telephone: + 46 (0)31-772 1000

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores which branding-related activities are most commonly performed in order to differentiate generic products (or services). It also explores how control over such products (and services) is claimed. To formulate an answer, a literature review has been made, investigating how to differentiate products and intellectual property rights' role within branding. The importance for companies to differentiate their brands increases and ways to do so are for example to build the generic product into a concept or to add attributes such as additional features, a design that's iconic for the brand or irrelevant attributes. Brands should also incorporate intellectual property management into the creative process as all aspects in marketing can be covered by intellectual property rights, but their strength will vary. A qualitative study has been made, exploring the most common branding activities among 30 companies who all have managed to differentiate generic products (or services). Most common is to use influencers for marketing and to deviate from the product segment's norm. The study has also investigated the companies' intellectual property strategies and their control-related issues such as infringement. It shows that the need for control varies with product segment and that most companies solely rely on trademarks. Companies tend to protect aspects of their business that aren't relevant when considering their main differentiating aspects. Trade dress protection has proved to be useful in case of infringement. The result from the study has been analysed in respect to theory, clarifying which aspects of a brand that are in focus when performing the most common brand activities. Companies mainly focus on establishing their brand image. This is done by evoking associations, which also affects the company's credibility. They also focus on increasing brand awareness. There are indications on that a company's brand in itself has stronger impact than its value proposition for attracting customers.

Key words: Brand management, generic products, differentiating, commodities, controlling generic products, protecting generic products, intellectual property management and branding, brand activities, differentiation

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Erica Dahlgren Nurman

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1. Introduction

This chapter provides an initial explanation of generic products' contexts and a clarification of what the thesis aims to do. It also sets the scope for the thesis, with its delimitations and assumptions.

1.1 Background

With an ever-increasing amount of products and services offered on the market, companies work hard to be perceived as better (in some way) than others (Fiske and Silverstein, 2003; Williams, 2004). Traditionally better has been equal to cheaper (Hill, McGrath and Dayal, 1998). If it's impossible to offer the same perceived value as the competitors to a lower price though, the perceived value needs to change instead (Heiden, 2015). There are many different ways to change the perception of an offer's value, for example by adding technological features or through innovation. Another highly efficient tool is branding.

There are many definitions of what a brand is, some focusing on brand elements such as having a logotype or a name in order to separate one seller's product from another's (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 4). There's also a psychological layer to a brand and a brief description of it is that it's the *perception* of something such as a company, a person or an organization (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 5). Everyone has a brand, no matter whether it's managed or not. The brand gives the observer an understanding (conscious or subconscious) about what it stands for, who it is for, what it represents etc. (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 5). Branding can thus be seen as the activity of aligning people's actual perceptions with a sought perception. The goal is for people to have a shared perception of how a certain brand is differentiated from the rest and what makes it better (in some way) than others. There are not only benefits for the company in managing their brand: It also helps customers to make decisions and create expectations on what they are about to buy (Aaker, 1992, 29).

As mentioned earlier, differentiation can for example be done through innovation or by adding technological features to a product. However, if the product is a commodity and technology or functionality-related features aren't applicable, branding becomes even more crucial: Because if the price isn't lower and improved functionality isn't needed, the brand can be what separates a product from another and makes it more appealing in the eyes of the consumer (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 5).

As competition becomes more fierce, companies need to control their value propositions and prevent others from tapping into their differentiating aspects (Chasser and Wolfe, 2010). Similar to the challenges in differentiating commodities, the more generic a product is, the harder it is to protect it. A technological breakthrough can for example be patented (Uspto.gov, 2014), thereby preventing others from exploiting it but how can someone prevent others from selling a pen?

1.2 Problem statement

If offering a generic product there's a great challenge in trying to differentiate the offer. If succeeding however, there's possibly an even greater challenge in controlling those differentiating aspects.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to provide concrete examples of which activities companies most commonly perform in order to differentiate their generic products (or services). The aim is also to explore which aspects of a brand that these activities are affecting, thereby giving a suggestion on which activities and brand aspects to prioritize when trying to differentiate generic products (and services). Lastly, the purpose of the thesis is to investigate how the same companies claim control over their value propositions and how successful these strategies are.

1.3.1 Research Questions

In order to fulfil the purpose of this thesis, two questions will be answered.

RQ1

Which activities are most common for differentiating generic products (or services)?

RQ2

What is common practice for claiming control over differentiated generic products (or services) and how well does it work?

1.3.2 Delimitations and Assumptions

This thesis does not take any financial aspects of brands into consideration. This means that the studied brands' respective brand values are not taken into account. If this had been included in the study, it is possible that other activities could have been proved to be more powerful than the most common ones. It is however assumed that the brand activities that are most commonly performed among companies that have managed to differentiate generic products are the activities with strongest effect - at least in relation to effort.

The companies in the study are considered successful in their branding, for example due to their brand recall depth.

The analysis is performed on the result of the study in respect to the concepts and theories presented in the literature review (and theoretical framework) only.

2. Methodology

This chapter describes the procedure for conducting the thesis. It also describes with what perspective it has been done. Continuing, the chapter declares how a literature review has been conducted and how a qualitative, comparative study has been conducted. The execution of the study is described in more detail, including how the studied objects have been chosen and how data has been gathered and analysed. The chapter also provides a discussion on the quality of the research performed in the thesis.

2.1 Research Process

While some activities have overlapped each other and been iterated, the thesis has primarily been conducted in the following order:

1. A literature review was made to establish definitions and views on concepts that are relevant for the thesis and to explore these concepts in the context of generic products becoming differentiated. The literature review was also conducted to understand what best practice is considered to be for intellectual property in relation to creative branding content. This is presented in Chapter 3. Theory.
2. As suggestions for best branding practice in the literature tend to be quite general, a comparative study of brands that have managed to differentiate generic products was conducted in order to more specifically identify which branding activities are most often performed. It was further investigated how (well) such brands manage to control their brand and business through intellectual property rights and if they use any other tools in this pursuit. This study had an inductive approach and it's assumed that the pattern among the investigated brands, due to their similarities and the number of them, correlates with other brands (meeting the same requirements). Two elements that were found in theory (irrelevant attribute and recurring design attribute) were searched for, thus using a deductive approach. This is presented in Chapter 4. Results.
3. A comparison of the results and theory was made in order to identify differences and similarities between the two. This is presented in Chapter 5. Analysis.
4. From this, a conclusion was drawn about the most common underlying intentions with the identified branding activities. A conclusion was also drawn on the brands' control situation and how they should use IPRs most efficiently. This is presented in Chapter 6. Conclusion.

2.2 Research Strategy

This thesis includes a qualitative study, which has some quantitative elements embedded into it: The author has had an abductive approach to the thesis, with an inductive approach to the actual gathering of data, except for two phenomena (*irrelevant attribute* and *recurring design attribute*) found in theory, which

deductively have been searched for, lastly comparing the results with theory in the analysis.

The thesis is ontologically subjective as it investigates the world of branding and intellectual property, which are institutionalized realities and therefore, in a sense, not real unless we interpret them in a certain manner.

Being a mixed methods research, the thesis is epistemologically subjective in some cases, and objective in others (Bryman and Bell, 2003): The gathered data comes from virtual documents such as online magazine interviews, containing other people's observations and interpretations and is therefore seen as subjective. An example of this is how spokespersons are considered to be influencers, which depends on the sought audience and can thus not be considered an objective statement. Also the data has been coded based on the author's interpretations. These two aspects indicate that the study is epistemologically subjective and qualitative. The objective elements come from the fact that the coded data has been treated as elements that can be handled without need for interpretation. Once data has been coded, it has gone from being epistemologically subjective to objective and quantifiable.

2.3 Research Design

2.3.1 Comparative Design

The study has a comparative design, as 30 brands have been compared to each other in order to identify the most common activities relating to branding and control. One could argue that the study also has elements of a case study, as each of the 30 brands has been investigated individually and quite thoroughly. However, it's the *comparison* of the cases that gives the result, as the data has been coded and treated as epistemologically objective elements that have been counted in order to identify the most common activities among all 30 brands.

2.3.2 Research Quality

In order to investigate the study's trustworthiness, four quality aspects for qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 2013) are discussed below.

Credibility

It is important to remember that the data for the study often corresponds to the image the brands aim to establish. The study's author has in many cases used several sources providing the same information, in order to increase the study's credibility but the truth is owned by the brands' founders and business partners and the message spread in articles is limited to what they tell, resulting in lower reliability. One could argue that since most data about the investigated brands is in line with their brand image, the brands' own and their fans' perspective is prioritized over dislikers' views. This has unfortunately been hard to avoid, simply since most information on branding activities within a certain brand has turned out to be told by people in favour of - or at least not against - the brand. To some extent, this issue is dealt with thanks to the different nature of the two research questions, where data from the first tends to come from neutral or brand-positive sources, and the other research question to large extent is answered with epistemologically objective data (such as whereas a brand owns

patents or not) and data exposing the brands' failures in protecting themselves. In that way, both positive and negative aspects of the brands are brought to light.

Transferability

The clear requirements and limitations for which brands that have been included in the study set the scope for the study's transferability (which corresponds to quantitative studies' external validity). The large amount of brands that have been explored and investigated in the study is another aspect that increases the likelihood of the study having a high transferability.

Dependability

As the study is based on brands that are considered strong at a certain time, and with trends and tools constantly changing, it's unclear whether the presented results could be repeated. Although the same results may not be repeatable, considering the changing nature of branding, it is likely though that a similar study can be performed, because of its thoroughly described procedure (see 2.4 Data Collection and 2.5 Data Analysis).

Conformability

As the study is based on interpreting data from interviews and articles in combination with the author being alone in this pursuit, ensuring conformability (which corresponds to quantitative studies' objectivity) has been an issue. In order to decrease this risk however, all gathered data is presented in Appendix I, together with each statement's source(s). Instead of only presenting the number of brands performing a certain activity, the study also presents *which* brands are doing so, in order to simplify the process of deducing the evidence for such claim.

2.4 Data Collection

2.4.1 Theoretical Sampling

Except for two cases that have been explored deductively (*irrelevant attribute* and *recurring design attribute*), data has been gathered inductively and in accordance with theoretical sampling: Starting with exploring several virtual documents (online articles) about a few different brands, certain topics proved to be recurring (see Appendix I): The content would vary between the brands but they would all affect a certain business activity, for example the launch of the brand or marketing activity. These business activities or topics set the initial scope for what content (data) to include in the study. When identifying more brands, the number of topics grew only to a small extent and the content within each topic recurred more often (some more often than others) and was thus coded together.

Both research questions are answered through a comparative study of the branding and concept building activities (for RQ1) and control activities (for RQ2) of 30 firms that have managed to differentiate generic products.

2.4.2 Sample Selection

The brands in the study have been selected primarily by asking people in the surrounding for suggestions (see the requirements below). This method for choosing

the brands have been irregular and uncontrolled, and can therefore be accused of being unscientific. The author would however argue that the unstructured way of choosing the brands for the study in itself is what makes it trustworthy and what gives the brands their right to be included: The fact that the brands have been recalled and suggested by people in varying context, without any specific brand cues (other than the requirements mentioned below), speaks for the profound brand awareness depth that all these brands have established.

Requirements

Requirements / Limitations for the companies / brands in the study are the following:

- The brands are recalled when given the following requirements.
- Although the value proposition (concept) may differ, the brands' products (or services) in themselves should have generic counterparts. The extent to which the differentiated and the generic product differ from each other may vary between the subjects in the study, depending on type of product and which segment it belongs to.
- The brands' differentiating aspects may not be patentable.
- The company may not use its own heritage in its branding. This should not be mistaken for companies that brand themselves in a nostalgic way, thus creating a *perception* of heritage (these companies are allowed and present in the study).
- The company should preferably not be established by an already well-established organization, such as an FMCG company. There is no distinct definition for what a well-established organization is however, and one could argue that founders with a well-established personal brand or an impressive entrepreneurial track record could have a similar head start as for example an FMCG company when developing a new brand. Brands that have owners who were known by the target market already before the launch of the brand, are highlighted in the study as "Spokesperson almost equal to the brand".
- The brand should offer consumer goods or services.

The brands have been added to the study until the author has noticed a saturation in the brands' activities and strategies, from where a few additional brands were added in order to be more certain that the saturation was a pattern.

2.4.3 Gathering data of branding activities differentiating generic products

As stated, the brands' activities within each topic have been identified from virtual documents such as online articles and interviews, primarily about the brands and their founders, as well as brand websites. The search-engine Google has been used for finding these sources and although not an extensive list, the following search words have been used most frequently:

- *brand name* “success story”
- *founder’s name* “success story”
- *brand name* branding
- *brand name* “branding strategy”
- *brand name* marketing
- *brand name* “marketing strategy”
- *brand name* collaboration
- *brand name* launch
- *brand name* retailers
- *brand name* history

In some cases, Swedish search words have been used.

The results are presented in sub-chapter 4.1 Common branding activities for differentiating generic products.

2.4.4 Gathering data of control activities for (differentiated) generic products

Control activities and their success are explored through a comparison of how the 30 studied brands manage control of their brands and products (or services), which problems they have encountered (and why) and litigation cases.

The search engine Google has been used for finding these sources and although not an extensive list, the following search words have been used most frequently:

- *brand name* counterfeit
- *brand name* litigation
- *brand name* lawsuit
- *brand name* fake
- *brand name* copy
- *brand name* infringement

To map out the brands’ registered trademarks (including trade dress), the Trademark Electronic Search System (TESS) - a search engine provided by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) - has been used. More specifically, the Basic Word Mark Search has been used.

The search has been limited to live registrations. The brand name was inserted as the Search Term and the searches have been limited to only show hits where the company name could be found as the trademark owner. In cases where no hits were found, the search has been changed to show hits no matter where the brand or company name is to be found. In some cases, the search has been made to identify trademarks owned by a founder instead of a brand or company name. In one case, where no trademark could be found, the Danish Patent and Trademark Office’s online tool PVSONline has been used.

To find utility patents and design patents, the search engine Google Patents has been used. The searches have been limited to show hits where the brand or company name (or in some cases the founder) is the assignee of the patent.

The control activities that don't include intellectual property rights (found under "Other control activities" were identified in the data gathering for RQ1. The results are presented in sub-chapter 4.2 Common control activities for generic products.

2.5 Data Analysis

2.5.1 Study

The gathered data has been inserted into a spreadsheet, with the relevant data put under the most appropriate topic.

When analysing data, which in this study equals to identifying recurring activities among brands, this has initially been done one topic at a time, comparing data from one brand with data of the others. As a second step, activities under other topics have in some cases coincided with activities primarily identified under other topics, and have thus been added.

2.5.2 Comparison of gathered data and theory

Similarly, each identified common branding activity has then been evaluated in the light of theory. The result of this is presented in Chapter 5. Analysis. As a second step, patterns have been highlighted, presented in Chapter 6. Conclusion.

3. Theory

This chapter starts with explaining important concepts for the thesis and gives an understanding for a brand's different aspects, competitive advantage in relation to brands and an introduction to intellectual property rights. It also moves further into the branding and protection context specifically for generic products and explains how control and differentiation are suggested to be achieved.

3.1 Brand Equity

Though there are different ways to measure it, Brand Equity can be seen as the difference between the outcomes of marketing a product with versus without a brand. (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 42). Brand equity is positive when a branded product becomes superior (on some level) compared to its unbranded counterpart. The opposite, where the brand has a negative effect on the perception of the product, is called negative brand equity (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 54).

Aaker argues (1992, 56) it's important to manage brand equity since assets have the potential to generate long-term profitability, as opposed to focusing on short-term profitability, which used to be the case for many businesses, aiming for good economic results on a quarterly basis. In a study about which assets are considered most important for a business' success, many of them were related to brand equity (Aaker, 1992, 56). Moreover, brand equity gives an alternative to compete with low price (Aaker, 1992, 57; Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 54).

3.1.1 Aaker's Brand Equity Model

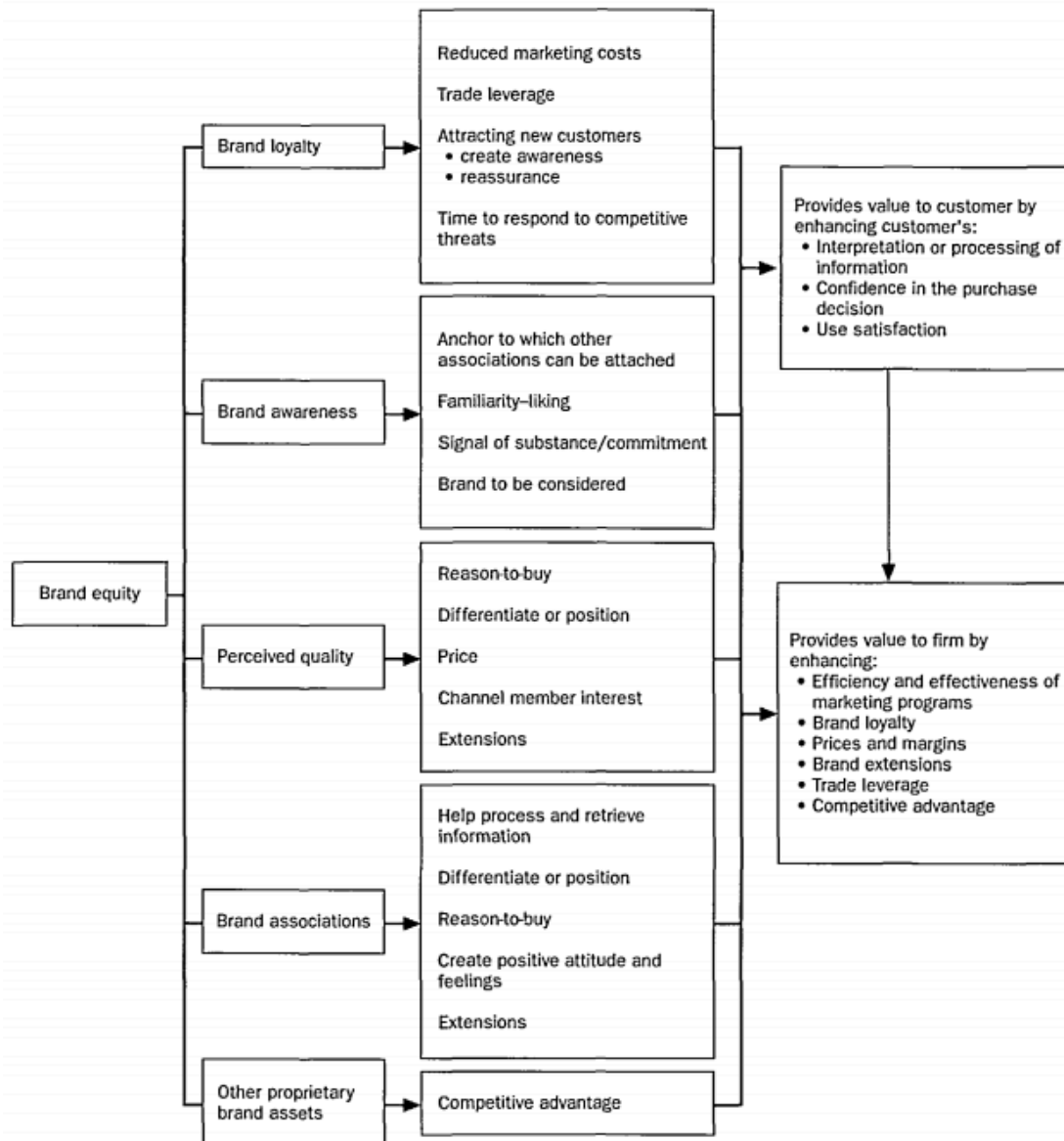


Figure 9: Aaker's Brand Equity Model (Aaker, 1992, 28).

The reasoning behind Aaker's view on Brand Equity is that it generates value to the customer, which in turn generates value to the firm. Most importantly, this process is iterative, generating greater value to the firm as its fan base increases. According to Aaker (1992, 28) brand equity is built of five parts: Loyalty, Awareness, (Perceived) Quality, Associations, and Other Proprietary Assets. Having loyal customers is profitable, as they require less investment than gaining new customers. An additional benefit is that they through word-of-mouth can lead new customers to the brand (Aaker, 1992, 28-29). Awareness is related to the likelihood of a brand coming to mind and being considered as an option and is deemed to be one of the most important assets for an organization (Aaker, 1992, 30; Aaker, 1992, 56). Perceived Quality, which has the potential to give a customer an incentive to buy, is according to some studies the most important asset for an organization and is affected by aspects such as a brand offer's pricing, functions and positioning (Aaker, 1992, 29-30). Brand associations help the customer to understand what the brand is about and develop

emotions for its (perceived) meaning. These associations can stem from any of the brand touch-points; from attributes on the product to the country where it's produced (Aaker, 1992, 31). Lastly, Other Proprietary Assets aim to give the company a competitive advantage in such way that it gets more exposure or better control over its assets (for example through intellectual property rights). It is argued that this last aspect of brand equity has less importance and functions as a complement to the other four cornerstones (Aaker, 1992, 28).

3.2 Customer-Based Brand Equity

Chasser and Wolfe (2010) suggest using the term Brand Value in order to describe the financial aspects of a brand, while the customer-experience aspects are often described as Customer-Based Brand Equity, shortened: CBBE (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 54).

CBBE constitutes of three parts: In order to have brand equity, the consumer must (re)act *differently* to a branded product than if it didn't have a brand. This difference should stem from the consumer's view on the brand, whether it's gained from experience or attention. Lastly, the different consumer behaviour gained through brand equity is concerning behaviour as a result of (some kind of) marketing (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 54). As an example, opening a lid differently due to a brand labels' position on a container (granted that this doesn't affect the perception of the product or generate any associations), is not a different behaviour that is a result of brand equity, as this different behaviour is based on functionality and not the marketing efforts of the brand.

3.2.1 The Customer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid

In order to improve a brand's Customer-Based Brand Equity, a framework has been developed consisting of a pyramid divided into six blocks (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 66). The framework also highlights the importance for a brand to speak to the consumer's heart as well as providing an offer that lives up to the consumer's actual requirements (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 84-85).

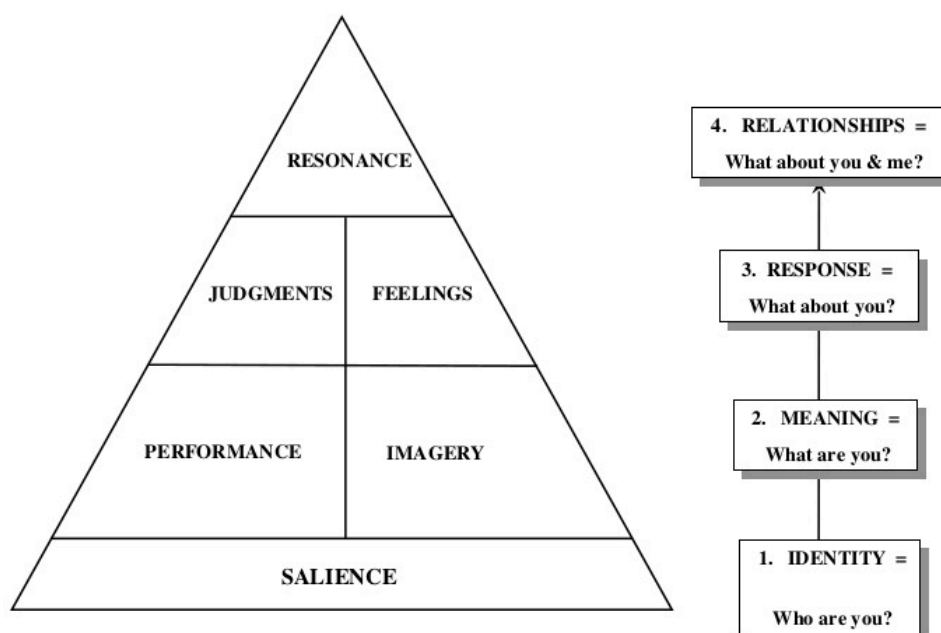


Figure 10: Customer-Based Brand Equity Model (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 66).

Brand Identity: Salience

Starting at the bottom of the pyramid, the initial aim is to increase brand awareness. Brand awareness is the term for valuating how easily a brand comes to mind by the consumers. For depth, the lowest level of brand awareness is called Brand Recognition and occurs when a brand is recognized while it's exposed in some sort of way, for example if its logotype is shown. The deeper level of brand awareness is called Brand Recall and requires that someone is able to suggest a certain brand when being given a cue or requirement, for example a type of product. Depending on the shopping situation, the importance of brand recall versus brand recognition can vary. A brand can also have varying scenarios in which they can be recalled or considered as an option to be used. This is called brand awareness breadth and increases with the number of contexts in which a brand is considered. The breadth can be limited by how the brand defines its products (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 60, 68). For example, if defining a product as a sandwich spread, the only time this product might be recalled is when planning to eat a sandwich, such as for breakfast or a snack. Although the product *could* be used for a rich sauce, as dip or a gratin, it is not recalled when given such cues.

Brand Meaning: Performance & Imagery

The second pyramid level is divided into two blocks: Performance and Imagery. Both aim to distinguish what should set a certain brand apart from others and to establish associations (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 66).

Performance refers to the products' actual attributes and functionality and how well it corresponds to the customer's wishes and requirements. This also covers pricing point and aesthetics (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 71-72).

Brand Imagery is the brand's more subconscious or underlying perception of the brand: A sense of who the brands customers are, in what context it's bought and used, what values it has and how it's positioned (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 72-74).

In order to establish positive consumer-based brand equity, a brand needs to have a positive brand image. This doesn't mean that a brand must express a positive message: The central part is to evoke associations that the target audience finds to be strong, favourable and unique. (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 62) If being successful in this pursuit, it generally means that the associations reflect how the consumer wants to be perceived (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 74). A brand's ability to deliver these associations isn't limited to traditional marketing in any way. Instead, it can consist of product-related attributes, such as a certain packaging, non-product-related attributes, such as to who the brand aims its offers, and benefits, which constitutes of everything that the consumer considers the brand to fulfil on an emotional level (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 63-64). By making the "right" associations come to mind, the brand helps the consumer to form an understanding for the brand's position, as the brand image will have similarities to other brands' image (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 65). The connection between these brands can for example be that they all target the same audience, their products belong to the same category, or that they have the same price-level in their respective segments.

Brand Response: Judgements & Feelings

The response level aims to evoke a reaction to the brand. (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 66)

Brand judgement aims to get the customer to form an opinion about the brand: One factor that influences the opinion concerns the brand's quality, answering how well a brand performs on what it's believed to deliver. Another factor is the brand's credibility of living up to the associations it aims to evoke. A third factor, brand consideration, is connected to brand awareness breadth, with the difference that instead of focusing on in which usage settings a brand might come to mind, brand consideration deals with whether or not consumers see the brand as an option for themselves. An example would be if knowing a brand and finding it credible, but not being interested in what it offers, thereby not considering it. One last factor to get the customer to form an opinion about a brand is whether or not it's seen as superior to its alternatives (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 75-76).

Feelings refer to how a brand (and using its offer) makes its consumer feel. With varying intensity, these emotions either bring positive feelings immediately (for example, playing a video game can be *fun* or *exciting*) or internally (for example, a certain workout regime can increase *self-respect*) (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 76, 78).

Brand relationships: Resonance

The last building block for customer-based brand equity is to build loyalty. Resonance deals with how engaged customers are and feel in a brand. It can be expressed as intense consumption behaviour, but in such case it's also necessary that the purchase is based on a "feel" for the brand and not only for the need of the product (buying the same toothpaste repeatedly because it's the only brand that the local store offers, doesn't mean that the brand has resonance). Another way of establishing resonance is if the customers of a certain brand feel a connection between each other. The strongest brand resonance is achieved when customers are seeking to engage with the brand outside of a purchase or consumption situation (Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 79-81). An example can be when a customer by own will advertises a certain brand on its social media channels or when a customer subscribes to a newsletter.

3.3 Competitive Advantage in a Knowledge-Based Economy

Heiden (2015) argues that Competitive Advantage is the ability to create more economic value in comparison to competitors. This in turn, can be achieved in two ways: Either the perceived value can be increased, justifying a higher price, or the perceived value can remain constant to the competitors but with a lower price-tag. A competitive advantage for a commodity is gained by the latter strategy (Aaker, 1992, 57; Keller, Apéria and Georgson, 2008, 54), whereas the (perceived) value increase strategy calls for differentiation (Heiden, 2015).

A company can create a competitive advantage from its resources, capabilities and market position. In order for a resource to function as a competitive advantage it needs to be valuable and rare. However, in order to *remain* a competitive advantage, it

also needs to be durable, meaning that it cannot expire or lose its allure even if being unlimited. Lastly, it needs to be imperfectly imitable, meaning that no-one else should be able to get hold of the same resource unless at a higher level of effort (Heiden, 2015).

3.3.1 Value acquired through knowledge

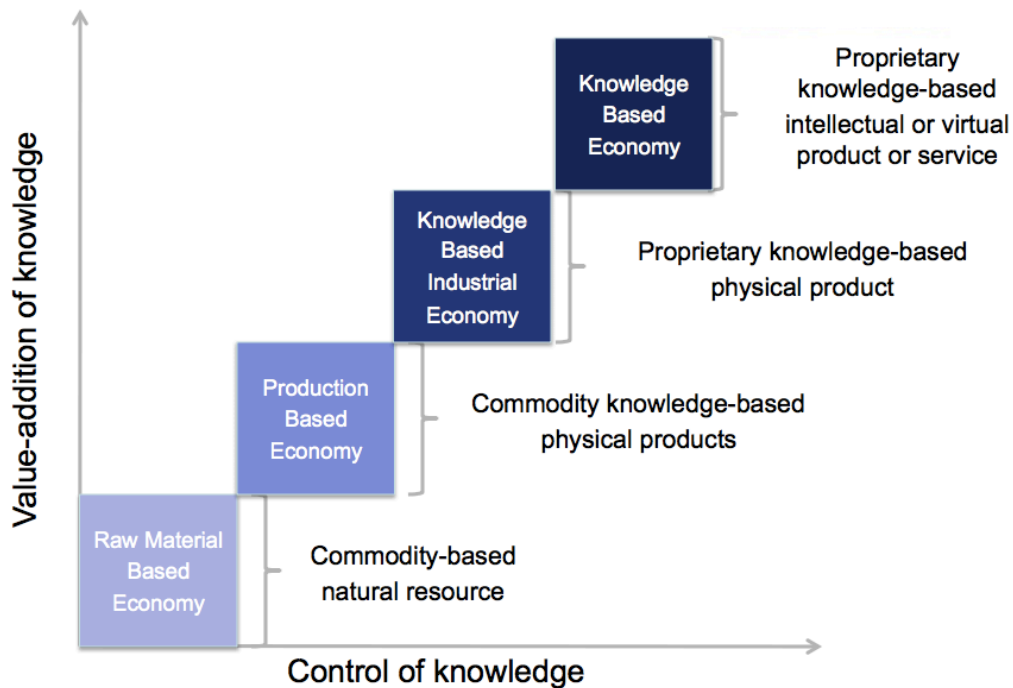


Figure 11: Different types of economies due to knowledge-addition (and control of it) (Heiden, 2015).

Society has developed from a raw material-based economy where those with access to raw material had the power as it could be sold in its natural state. With increasing knowledge, the raw materials could be refined and combined into commodities: products serving some sort of function (whether necessary such as tiles, or desired such as coffee). Such a product has an advantage if it can offer the same value as its competitors but to a lower price and belongs to a production-based economy. As mentioned above, the alternative way of developing a competitive advantage is to differentiate the product, thus boosting it with a sense of providing something extra that is worth paying for. What allows such products to take the step from a production-based economy to a knowledge-based industrial economy is that their competitive advantage is based on some kind of knowledge instead of low price. As an example, one could see a pair of cheap jeans bought in a supermarket as part of the production-based economy, whereas a pair of Levis jeans, which are perceived as more valuable (thanks to their brand) although providing the same function, belong to the knowledge-based industrial economy. It's important to understand that this knowledge-generated advantage isn't limited to branding though. Other knowledge-based competitive advantages can for example be new technology or a business model that optimizes the business in some way.

Climbing the ladder even further, there are also businesses within an even more knowledge-based economy, whose main activity is to sell that differentiating effect in its raw form: not yet applied to products, for others to apply and profit from.

With more knowledge applied in order to generate value, the control of that value needs to increase as more effort has been put into acquiring it. (Heiden, 2015).

3.4 Differentiating Commodities

Levitt argues that although products in themselves might be generic and undistinguishable from one company to another, the businesses who offer these products are *always* differentiated (Levitt, 1980, 83). It is argued that a product's quality or functions are rarely what make it successful. Instead it's how well it corresponds to the customers' expectations (Levitt, 1980, 86). Furthermore, a product can be *augmented* by exceeding the customers' expectation (Levitt, 1980, 87).

Hill, McGrath and Dayal (1998) reason that in order for a commodity to become differentiated, it needs to be part of a greater concept. Focusing on industrial low-tech products, they state that there are only six different dimensions in which a value proposition for a commodity can be tweaked: *Quality Control* and *Supply Reliability* (offering increased consistency), *Matching* and *Applications Knowledge* (offering increased customization) and lastly *Packaging* and *Taking Responsibility* (offering increased convenience). Lastly, offerings within these six dimensions need to be combined in order to make it harder for competitors to match or stand equal to the advantages.



Figure 12: The six dimensions for differentiating commodities (Hill, McGrath, Dayal, 1998).

In the market of generic drugs, Williams (2004, 349) describes a situation where brands have become the new reassuring entity, replacing the role that institutions and authorities used to have. This increasing independency among people, seeking information and control by themselves instead of trusting their authorities, seems to reflect society in general, with its individualization and information access overload. However, Levitt (1980, 88) reported already in the eighties about an increasing amount of differentiated (former generic) products, which indicates that our strive for individualization isn't new. In this individualized context, Williams (2004, 349) argues that brands function as "a badge of trust". In this pursuit, the importance of establishing a clear brand identity is emphasized, where the product packaging (with

its symbols) has the potential to constantly remind the consumer of what the product can offer (Williams, 2004, 350-351).

3.4.1 Increased importance to differentiate

Where the old tradition was for the poor to only buy low-cost and the rich to solely choose luxury brands, consumers today spend more on what they feel is important and less on what they don't care as much about. Where Williams (2004) referred to a growing disbelief in authorities, Fiske and Silverstein (2003) see the increasing demand for brands as a result of an emotional awareness among consumers, who seek options for expressing themselves and tools for becoming who they want to be. Fiske and Silverstein (2003) further argues that this has made it crucial to differentiate products and unless they can be defined as low-cost, new-luxury or some kind of extreme luxury, it's hard for a brand to be noticed and appreciated. The emergence of new-luxury brands often comes from founders outside of the product market, looking at the product with a fresh perspective. These new-luxury brands don't need a heritage to rely on, nor do they need the lowest prices, as they change the way we see their type of product. Differentiation can even make room for new competitors in seemingly saturated markets (Datamonitor, 2004, 13).

Besides the opportunity for historical luxury brands to introduce a lower-priced product segment, there are two additional ways for developing new-luxury goods:

One way is to choose a product segment whose highest-priced alternatives will allow a company to make a substantial profit, but where the price is still low enough for the general consumer to afford. An example of this is Starbucks Coffee, who charges more than most other coffee shops for a take-away coffee. The amount of money that is charged isn't high in general; it's just expensive for being coffee.

Fiske and Silverstein (2003) have also coined the word *masstige*, an abbreviation of mass prestige, describing a new type of luxury, which price-wise is positioned a bit above the commodity products but still far from the super premium alternatives. This way, the price is low enough to generate mass consumption but each product is also generating a higher profit than the cheaper generic alternative.

Because of new-luxury's position between low-priced products that need to be sold in large quantities in order to generate profit and luxury goods that need greater skill, time and investment to be produced, it is also argued that new-luxury brands are able to go to market faster and try out ideas faster with smaller investment (Fiske and Silverstein, 2003).

3.5 Adding attributes to differentiate products

Nowlis and Simonson (1996, 37) argue that an additional feature has greater impact on a product with lower performance than the same kind of product with a higher performance and give an example of a pair of binoculars where a step from four to eight times magnification capacity will have greater impact than a pair of binoculars' magnifying capacity increasing from 14 to 18. It is further explained that if two similar products already have a set of different features, adding yet another feature to one of the two products will only have a small impact on the perception of the products' differences. The authors describe this phenomenon as *Multiattribute diminishing sensitivity*, meaning that with few and few *varying* features, adding a novel feature will distinguish one product more from the other.

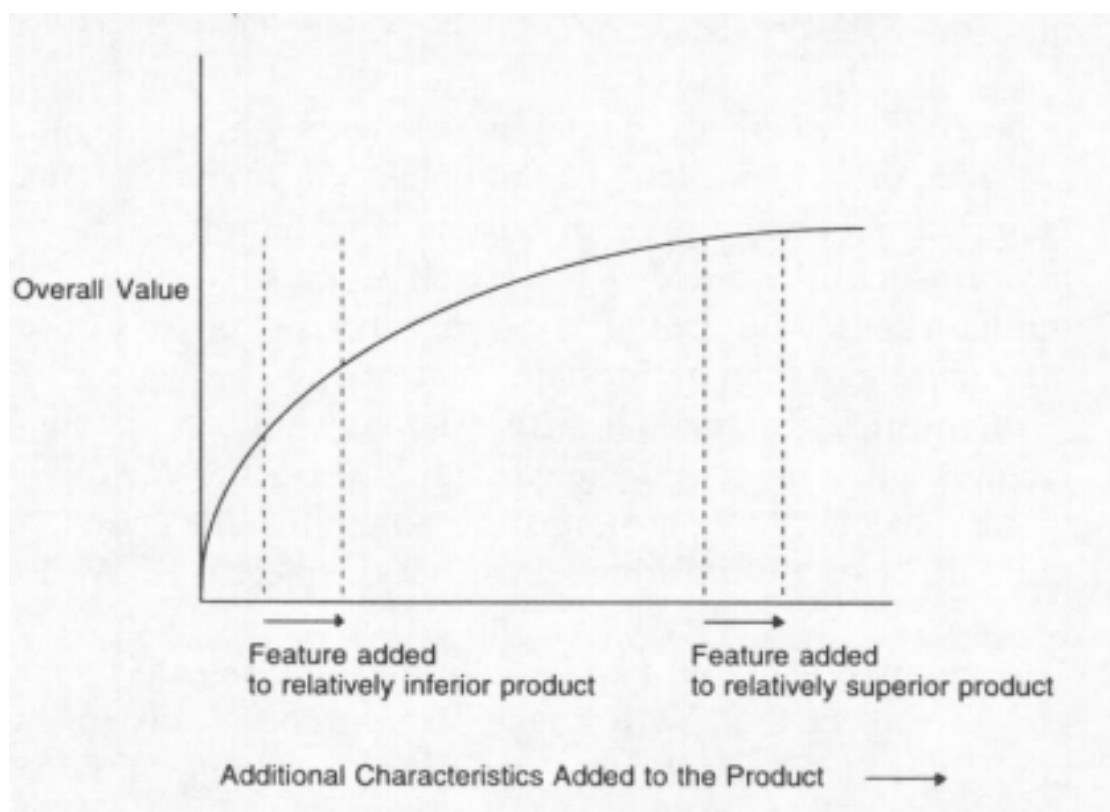


Figure 13: Multiattribute Diminishing Sensitivity (Nowlis and Simonson, 1996, 37).

It is also argued (Nowlis and Simonson, 1996, 38) that people believe a new feature's performance to be better if it's applied to a product which is higher in quality and that already has many features, whereas the opposite (low quality and few features) generates a belief that the added feature won't live up to the expectations.

It is consequently recommended that new features are added to products that are already perceived as high-quality and that the added feature has its greatest impact on the buying behaviour among consumers who need rational reasons for choosing one product over another (Nowlis and Simonson, 1996, 44). Alternatively, since a new feature will have greatest impact if it's applied to a high-quality product, introducing a new feature can be a way for a company to increase its product prices, or at least provide a seemingly legit reason for doing so (Nowlis and Simonson, 1996, 45).

3.5.1 Irrelevant attributes

Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto (1994, 340) explain that an attribute added in order to differentiate a product and increase its competitive advantage doesn't necessarily need to have a function or even an actual benefit. Instead it's the customers' perception of what the new feature implies that generates a preference (Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto, 1994, 339). Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto describe this as *meaningless differentiation* or *irrelevant attribute* while others choose the less harsh terms *unneeded features* (Simonson, Carmon and O'Curry, 1994, 24) and *trivial attribute* (Sun, 2010, 1557). The irrelevant attribute can function as an association to a sought effect, and Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto (1996, 339) bring up an example of using the word Silk for a shampoo product, as it will lead the consumer to believe that using that specific shampoo will more likely lead to silky smooth hair, even though actual silk doesn't have that effect on hair. Another, less direct, way of generating a preference is to use an irrelevant attribute that (to the consumer) wouldn't make any sense unless it implied some kind of superior performance. Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto (1994, 341) mean that the attribute in itself, while not being informative enough to expose its advantage, leads the consumer to ask "Why would a company make the effort to promote this feature unless it's relevant?". Moreover, even if an attribute's irrelevance *is* understood by the consumer, the product can still be favoured since it's more distinctive (Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto, 1994, 341).

Unless the perceived superiority from the irrelevant attribute isn't reflected in the product's price, the irrelevant attribute is perceived as having low effect. If setting the price higher than its competitors, the product with the irrelevant attribute will be preferred (Sun, 2010, 1570) - even if its attribute's irrelevance is revealed (Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto, 1994, 344). When setting a premium price however, only products with irrelevant attributes that *seem* to be meaningful will be preferred (Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto, 1994, 347).

Sun explains (2010, 1558) that the findings in Carpenter, Glaze and Nakamoto's research isn't undisputed. It's also been stated that products with unneeded features might take the attention from more significant features that could otherwise have created a preference and that consumers can choose other products if they believe that the trivial attribute is what generates a product's higher price (Simonson, Carmon and O'Curry, 1994, 24). However, Sun's study shows that irrelevant attributes generate the strongest preferences when applied to products that are *highly involved* (Sun, 2010, 1570), i.e. products that consumers strongly identify themselves with and that are engaging the consumer, products that feel *important* in the consumers' lives (Sun, 2010, 1561).

3.5.2 Design attributes to establish brand identity

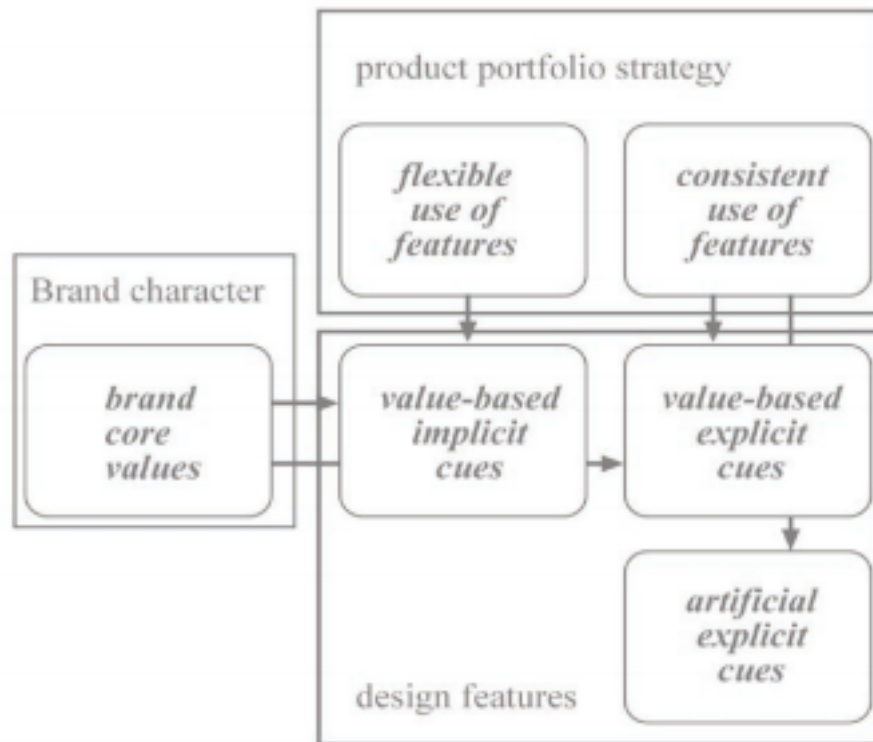


Figure 14: Framework for aligning design features with brand identity (Karjalainen, 2007, 69).

Karjalainen (2007) argues that another way of expressing brand values is through the design features of the product. Instead of adding features, as discussed by Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto (1994), a brand could stay consistent with its design features, and thus establish them as part of a potentially iconic look, harmonizing with and strengthening the brand identity (Karjalainen, 2007, 67). These design features are in a way another example of irrelevant attributes as their perceived effect rarely - if ever - corresponds to their actual effect on the product. These reappearing design features function both as a way to establish a recognizable style among the brands' products and as a way to emphasize the brand values (Karjalainen, 2007, 67). However, it is also explained that the design consistency of a brand can be *not* to reuse design features, if the brand for example aims to establish values of being disruptive newthinkers (Karjalainen, 2007, 68). It is also argued that staying too consistent with the design isn't sought either, as the products will then be deemed to lack novelty in the eyes of the customer (Karjalainen, 2007, 69). The design features are further divided into *explicit* and *implicit* design attributes, where the explicit ones are reused on different products while the implicit design features may differ from one product to another but always aim to establish the brand's values (Karjalainen, 2007, 69). While implicit design features *always* aim to reflect brand values, explicit design features are not limited to this and might instead be added without a reason other than to establish a brand look (Karjalainen, 2007, 68).

3.6 Controlling knowledge

Knowledge can be controlled through intellectual property rights (IPRs), secrets, contracts and first-mover advantage (Petrusson, 2004, 76). Besides utility patents, which can exclude others from exploiting an invention, other IPRs can cover less functional - yet still differentiating - sources of value. Chasser and Wolfe (2010) even argue that all parts in marketing can be protected in one way or another. However, it's important to remember that although something can be *covered* by an IPR, its strength will vary depending on its content. Below follows a brief explanation of what can be protected through different IPRs (Uspto.gov, 2014).

Utility Patents

Excludes other from exploiting an invention.

Design Patents

Excludes others from exploiting a non-functional design.

Trademarks & Service marks

Excludes others from using a name or symbol for the same commercial use.

Trade dress

Excludes others from using a shape or packaging for the same commercial use.

Copyright

Excludes others from copying creative work, such as literature, music, paintings etc.

3.6.1 Intellectual Property's role in branding

When Chasser and Wolfe (2010) asked branding professionals what they saw as common denominators among the world's highest valued brands, the answer was their ability to create strong emotional bonds with their customers and that they do this in all touch points. Another shared feature was that the brands aren't fixed but instead develop in order to remain interesting to their customers.

When asking intellectual property lawyers about the common denominators, the answer was instead that these brands are protected in multiple ways and that the brands are focused and consistent in what they express, no matter the channel.

Similarly to Hill, McGrath and Dayal's (1998) standpoint that a generic product can only be differentiated by embedding the product into a greater concept, Chasser and Wolfe (2010) come to the conclusion that the strongest brands are the ones who have understood that it consists of many elements. They further argue that the strongest brands, which are able to stay strong over a long time, are the ones where intellectual property is incorporated into the creative work of the brand. Since the result of all branding activities can be protected by intellectual property rights, the potential IPR's strength should be considered when developing a creative brand element.

4. Results

This chapter shows the result of the gathered data, relating to the thesis' research questions.

4.1. Common branding activities for differentiating generic products

Below is a table showing which activities are the most common for differentiating generic products. It also shows which brands are performing these activities. The brands are categorized into different segments depending on their value proposition. The data is presented in its entirety in Appendix I.

This subchapter relates to the first research question (RQ1): *Which activities are most common for differentiating generic products (or services)?*

4.1.1 Activities

The tendencies found in the qualitative study will here be presented in order from most to least common practice.

Influencers 50%

Half of the brands in total, with all *Exercise* brands, over two thirds of the *Food & Beverage* brands and one third of the brands in *Beauty, Care & Cleaning, Clothing* and *Accessories & Useful Objects* respectively, use influencers for marketing their brands. Examples of these influencers can be social media celebrities, actors and athletes. Some of them are acquired by the brands while others are fans that have reached out to the brands themselves.

Unorthodox strategy to the segment custom 43%

Over one third of the brands are doing something dramatically different from what's common practice in their respective segments. Although these strategies vary, most common is to set a different price than what's common (both higher and lower than what's usual) or to change the sales experience from what's expected, defining the brands' products as belonging to other product categories than their generic counterparts. An example of this is how a supplement is sold in the beauty department.

Collaboration to create products 37%

Most of the *Accessories & Useful Objects* brands (5/9 brands) and half of the brands in the *Beauty, Care & Cleaning, Clothing* and *Exercise* segments, sell products from collaborations with other companies. In most cases, these co-created products are the same as the brands' original products but with an aesthetic made or inspired by the collaborating partner. In fewer cases, new products have been developed together.

Launch targeting influencers & establishing position 37%

When launching the brands' products/services, what was more common than building a reputation from small players (e.g. individual stores) to attract larger players (eg. chains), over one third instead focused from the start on targeting influencers and establishing a notion about the brands' position. This was the strategy for almost half of the *Food & Beverages* brands as well as the *Accessories & Useful Objects* brands (4/9 brands respectively) including all of the water brands. The ways to do this differ dramatically between the companies but can be categorized into limiting access, getting influencers as early customers (celebrities, fashion-related people) and sponsorship (financially or with products).

The brands are sprung from the founders' own needs 33%

Although the brands' products or services in this study are seen as general (yet somehow differentiated in the eyes of the consumer), the differentiating aspects of the brands were often sprung from the founders' own needs. Examples of these differentiating aspects would be more convenient access (Bread & Boxers, Lärabar), attention to skin sensitivity (Bliss Spa, The Art of Shaving) and introducing something that's more easily found in the founder's native country (Chobani, VOSS).

Avoiding traditional marketing 33%

One third of the brands, primarily in *Foods & Beverages* (4/9 brands) and *Accessories & Useful Objects* (3/9 brands) but with representatives in all segments, are or were for a long time avoiding traditional marketing (e.g. TV commercials and billboard advertising), instead relying on social media, word-of-mouth and other earned and owned media.

The concepts have a strong emphasis on social or environmental benefits 30%

Though many more have *some* engagement in environmental issues or CSR work, only the brands having social and/or environmental engagement as one of their core activities are included in these ten brands. Especially in the *Food & Beverages* segment (4/9 brands) and *Accessories & Useful Objects* (3/9 brands), environmental concern and social benefit play important roles in the brands' image and values. Also, the study's two cleaning brands are both emphasizing their environmental awareness. In the *Food & Beverages* segment, this environmental awareness is strongly connected to the brands' profile of being healthy, resulting in natural ingredients, non-GMO etc. which, simultaneously as healthy, are promoted as environmental-friendly. Many of these brands are also engaging their customers in charity, shoe-brand TOMS being the role-model with its One-for-one business model where the company donates one pair of shoes to a child in need, with each bought pair. Innocent Drinks is another example, who encourages its customers to knit hats to their bottles, for which the company will donate money to charity.

Marketing brand instead of product range 27%

Eight brands, with one third of the *Food & Beverages* brands, use marketing to establish their brand and brand values rather than their actual value propositions. Examples of these activities can be to host or sponsor exhibitions and launch festive events.

The brand as it's known today was initially a business extension 27%

Especially in the *Beauty, Care & Cleaning* segment (4/6 brands), product-centered brands as they're known today were originally an extension of a service business (SPAs, hairdressers). Starting the business without any "self-created" products is also common in the *Clothing* segment where 2/4 started as retailers.

Trade shows 23%

Another common strategy to launch the brands' products has been to attend trade shows. It's been argued that what's even more important than attending, is to make the booth stand out from the crowd and showing off the products in the best way possible.

Outsourcing distribution and marketing 20%

Although more brands outsource parts of their business activities (such as production), one in five brands also outsource the distribution of their products to agents or hire foreign marketing agencies for establishing their brand abroad.

Merchandise 20%

All *Exercise* brands and two of nine brands in *Food & Beverage* and *Accessories & Useful Objects*, respectively, offer merchandise, most commonly in the form of branded T-shirts. For the *Exercise* brands, merchandise has even grown into large business by itself.

Shopping experience 20%

Especially in the *Beauty, Care & Cleaning* segment (5/6), the brand focus on shopping experience. While some do this by still offering its initial services such as SPA treatments, this is also often done with educated sales personnel that give extensive advice on the customers' specific concerns, guide the customers to the right products and showcase how to use the products. These experiences are offered both in real-life stores as well as online. Other ways the shopping is turned into a brand experience is through free samples and artistic store interiors.

Story-telling 20%

In the *Accessories & Useful Objects* segment (3/9 brands) and for the study's both bottled water brands, storytelling are a large part of the brands. For the water brands, the story sold is about water from a place on earth that is still untouched, assumingly clearer than all other waters. For the remaining three, the stories' character differ: There are examples of brands based on a tale about a (possibly fictitious) *person*, a story centered around *helping someone in need*, and even a story of (fictitious) *heritage*.

Collaboration to create marketing material 17%

In some cases, the brands have teamed up with artists and partners to create material for marketing, such as short films and installations.

Launching imperfect products 17%

Food & Beverage as well as *Accessories & Useful Objects* brands (2/9 brands respectively), admit to initially having sold products that needed improvements. In case of the food brands, the improvements have concerned manufacturing, where products initially have been made by hand, whereas the accessory brands have needed to improve their products since the first batches.

Free samples 17%

When launching the products, many brands, especially in the *Food & Beverages* segment (4/9 brands), have offered free samples of their products, most often to the consumers but in some cases also to the retailers.

Close customer relationships 13%

Four brands emphasize their close relationship to their customers, especially using social media to connect with their fans and provide customer service. For these brands, it's argued that the customers play an important role in the brands' product development.

Rebellious act 13%

In four of thirty cases, the creation of the brand was a rebellious move against the norm: The common denominator among these is a wish for a more straight-forward and less exclusive approach to the offer.

Reinvesting profit to buy larger batches 10%

Four brands claim to have grown from investing their own money into buying a small batch and reinvesting the profit into larger batches.

Unconventional sales channels 10%

In accordance with many brands choosing unorthodox strategies to their segment custom, one in ten brands do this by re-defining their offering and selling it in untraditional channels. An example of this is how a brand selling high-end liquorice prioritizes quality and design over segment when choosing retailers. Another is how basic clothing garments such as T-shirts were sold in hotels “as an extension of the mini bar” instead of in clothing stores.

No Logo 10%

A few brands, especially in the *Clothing* category (2/4 brands), are *avoiding* logotypes, attracting customers who perceive themselves as above the need for loud statements. Ironically, it has become a statement to consume these brands. However, while these clothing brands still market themselves (in one case almost aggressively), another brand also joins the movement of no or at least quiet marketing (2/30 brands).

Spokesperson almost equal to the brand 10%

In three cases, the brands are (partially) owned by people who prior to the brand, were already known by the brands’ target audience. This functions as a springboard for gaining exposure, as magazines and online sites are more keen to mention the brands.

The brands were created to fill a gap in a current trend 10%

Although all successful brands have managed to fill a gap in the market, this study provides three cases where that gap has been identified in an on-going trend, and filled with an additional product category. In the retro trend, a lack of alternatives for bags was identified, in the “trend” of environmental awareness, cleaning supplies seemed to be left out of the conversation and in the case of colourful technology, the trend hadn’t yet spread to headphones.

Founder / Author 10%

One founder for each ten brands has published a book on a subject related to the founded brand, helping to establish the notion that the founder (and consequently the brand) is an expert in the field.

Product-centered business expanding into offering services 10%

In a few cases, brands have started by selling products and later added services to their value proposition, such as subscriptions, cloud services and delivery within the hour.

Concept before product 7%

In two cases, the brands’ products were an outcome of the concept. Both these examples come from the *Accessories & Objects* category, where Happy Plugs started with a slogan “What colour are you today?” and Happy Socks got found of its name and had only a vague idea about selling colourful socks.

Starting globally 7%

In the *Accessories & Useful Objects* segment, 2/9 brands outspokenly started selling their products globally from the very beginning. The reasoning is that if the concept is well packaged you might as well go international from the start. It can also be necessary to hit a global market in order to reach enough buyers.

4.1.2 Differentiating Attributes

Recurring design attribute other than label 40%

Over one third of the brands (5/9 brands in *Accessories & Useful Objects* and 4/9 brands in *Food & Beverage*) have non-functional design features that help forming their design identity.

Irrelevant attribute 30%

Almost one third of all brands also have some kind of irrelevant attribute. This is especially common within *Food & Beverage* (5/9 brands) where all water brands have irrelevant attributes from referring to distant locations. It is also common within *Beauty, Care & Cleaning* (2/6 brands) where the product names often (indirectly) imply a certain user experience or result.

4.2 Common control activities for generic products

Below is a table showing which intellectual property rights and other control activities are most commonly chosen for protecting (to some extent differentiated) generic products. It also shows which brands are experiencing control-related issues. Since all brands own trademarks (or service marks) and domain names, these are excluded from the table. Although 30 brands have been studied, only the ones that are experiencing control-related issues and/or are claiming control in more ways than through trademarks and domain names are presented in the table. The data is presented in its entirety in Appendix I.

This subchapter relates to the second research question (RQ2):

What is common practice for claiming control over differentiated generic products (or services) and how well does it work?

Segment	Brand	Control-Related Issues		Intellectual Property Rights			Other Protection Strategies					
		Counterfeit products	Infringing products	Utility Patents	Design Patents	Trade Dress	Offer Low-Price Option	First Mover Advantage	Inform Customers	Strengthen brand	Opportunism	
Beauty, Care & Cleaning	Bliss Spa											
	Bumble & Bumble											
	Method Products			Packaging	Packaging							
	The Art of Shaving											
Clothing	The Laundry											
	American Apparel											
	Chobani				Packaging							
Food & Beverage	Fiji Water				Cap							
	Moleskine											
	Monster Energy			Liquid dispenser	Packaging							
	VOSS											
Accessories & Useful Objects	Happy plugs				Packaging							
	Happy Socks											
	Herschel Supply Company											
	Moleskine			Evernote notebook								
	MUJI											
Exercise	TOMS		(no dispute)									
	UrbanEars											
	Zumba				Activewear							

Figure 16: Results showing the most common control activities, by which brands they are performed as well as their control-related issues.

4.2.1 Control-related issues

Being that all studied brands sell products that (if being harsh) in themselves don't differ much from non-differentiated, generic versions, all are experiencing competing products on the market. However, due to the fact that these brands *to some extent* have managed to differentiate their products from the generic type, competitors aim to benefit from their efforts. Below are presented such cases that are either complete replicas of the brands' products (described as Counterfeit) or cases that have been brought to court due to a competing product's similarity (described as Infringement).

Counterfeit 30%

Almost one third of the brands struggles with counterfeit products on the market. This is especially common for brands in *Beauty, Care & Cleaning* (3/6 brands), likely because of the products' liquid form, which makes it easy to dilute or replace the original formula with something that appears to be the same before use. Monster Energy drinks also deal with counterfeit issues, which is in line with the above assumption. In China, there's a case where a company has established a *chain* of counterfeit stores and since it has also registered the trademark, the original brand hasn't been able to enter the Chinese market.

Infringement 20%

One in five brands has competitors passing off their reputation to such extent that it's seen as infringement. These are found in the *Food & Beverage* segment (2/9 brands) and *Accessories & Useful Objects* (5/9 brands). In one case, the brand hasn't sued the infringers but since the case is noticed by the general public and wildly debated, it is incorporated as an infringement case in this study. While the brands in most cases have won their litigations thanks to their control activities, their intellectual property has also been challenged and turned out to be weaker than expected - or invalidated. An example of this is a product that was protected by copyright but which wasn't broad enough to stop a competitor from selling a similar product. In another case, the brand has won cases thanks to its trade dress protection but has also had to settle with a competitor as the trade dress has been invalidated.

It should also be noted that three of the studied brands have been accused of infringing.

4.2.2 Protection

4.2.2.1 Intellectual Property Rights

Trademarks 100%

All studied brands have their brand name and logo trademark protected. In three cases (2/6 brands in the *Beauty, Care and Cleaning* segment), the brands are also registered as service marks.

Trade Dress Protection 20%

One in five brands have also trademark protected their packaging or details of their products with trade dress protection (3D trademark). This is especially common in the *Food & Beverage* segment where half of the brands, including all water brands, have protected their packaging. For one water brand, this protection has led to less

infringement, whereas the other water brand has experienced both wins and settlements (due to its trade dress' lack of distinctiveness). For the brand that has a design protection yet still is being copied by a competitor, the trade dress protection covers a product which is an extension of the brand's product range, thus irrelevant for the protection of what the brand is mostly known for.

Design Patents 23%

Four out of six design patents (with *Food & Beverage* representing the most with 3/9 brands) are related to packaging design. Two of these nevertheless experience counterfeit and infringement, which in one case has to do with that the design patent isn't related to the product that's being copied.

Utility Patents 17%

Although the brands in this study are known for products that most often cannot be protected by a utility patent, five brands nevertheless own such patents. Many of these utility patents cover inventions that are outside of the brands' main scope and have limited importance for the protection of the brands' success.

4.2.2.2 Other Protection Strategies

Besides the above-mentioned intellectual property rights and domain names (which all studied brands have), the brands have additional control strategies in order to protect their brand position.

Offer Low-Price Option 7%

Two brand owners mean that you need to fill the price gap between your products and a potential competitor's imitation. A creative example of this is how one brand created another brand selling products almost identical to the original brand's but with a lower price in order not to lose low-price customers to competitors.

First Mover Advantage 7%

Two brands, both in the *Accessories & Useful Objects* segment, highlight that they were the first on their respective markets. In order to cope with the competition they now have, one brand claims to focus more on product development and marketing. The other highlights that the market they created will remain, but change, for which they'll need to adapt (or possibly lead the way). Moreover, a third brand means that the threat doesn't necessarily come from the segment in which the products belong, but that more relevant competitors can be found in other product categories, which offer an alternative for the brands' consumers to spend their money on.

Inform Customers 3%

A brand from the *Beauty, Care & Cleaning* segment, which is described as a "grey zone" where products can be diluted or sold after they've expired, aim to inform their customers by explaining on their website where their authentic products can be found and where not to buy them.

Strengthen brand values 3%

One brand argues that since their products are hard to protect, they instead focus on establishing their brand values, as those are considered harder to replicate.

Opportunism 3%

One brand who has a hard time staying on top of the counterfeit situation as their exercise DVDs are wildly copied and illegally sold, figured that since they couldn't stop it, they should try to benefit from it. By adding advertising both on the packaging as well as in the content, recommending the viewer to seek a real-life exercise class, their marketing is spread for free, potentially leading the consumer of the counterfeit DVD to seek the brands' other and, most importantly, *original* products and services.

5. Analysis

This chapter explains which aspects of a brand (presented in Chapter 3. Theory) that are affected most often through the most common activities (presented in Chapter 4. Results). It also compares the most common activities with what is suggested in Chapter 3. Theory.

5.1 Analysis of Activities

Influencers

Using influencers for marketing a brand can help customers get the “right” associations as they will connect their perception of the influencer with the brands’ values and standpoint. It can also give the brand credibility if the influencers are seen as credible within their fields. Moreover, by using an influencer who the target audience admires and relates to, the chances for the brand to be considered by that audience likely increases. Influencers also give the brand a proprietary asset as it gets additional space. If the influencer organizes competitions in collaboration with a brand, this also calls for interaction and thus brand resonance. Using influencers creates the impression that the promoted products are highly involved products in the influencers’ lives, which might up the chance for them to become highly involved products in the target customers’ own lives.

Risks can be if an influencer behaves in a manner that isn’t in accordance with the brand’s values or if the *influencers’* own brands are too varied, leading to confusion of what the promoted brand stands for.

Unorthodox strategy to the segment custom

Doing business differently within a segment is a way to generate new associations and possibly to broaden brand awareness. This in turn, could also lead to a change in who will consider the brand, if the broadened brand awareness coincides with a category that the potential customer considers. Changing the way people look at a certain product is a classic strategy among new-luxury brands but the study shows that the change in doing business sometimes instead is to *lower* the price (still without defining the offer as a commodity). The reason for such movement can be to establish a brand image of being honest.

Collaboration to create products

By collaborating with another brand, new associations can increase the credibility, if the collaborating partner is deemed credible. It is also a way to gain a proprietary asset as the brand will be shown in new channels, segments etc. Similar to the above-mentioned strategies, also collaborations can lead to new potential customers considering the brand, if they consider the collaborating partners’ brand and products.

As the product from the collaboration can be seen as if it has an added feature, there is a risk for multiattribute diminishing sensitivity. If collaborating with many different brands for example, the brand image risks becoming diluted. There are however also benefits with collaborating, for example that the collaborated product could motivate a higher price since it has an added feature.

Launch targeting influencers & establishing position

By immediately focusing on establishing the sought brand associations, the brand can more efficiently develop brand awareness, credibility and consideration among its target audience.

In some cases, this strategy involves limiting the access, which is the opposite of what the differentiating framework for commodities suggests. That is likely outweighed with the associations that exclusivity creates and the perceived quality coming from a high price point.

The brands are sprung from the founders' own needs

Stating that a brand's offer comes from a personal need for it can increase the brand's credibility for providing such offer. This also gives the founder a chance to function as a spokesperson for the brand, meaning that not only has the brand potential to attract customers interested in the value proposition, but also those who relate to the founder, since they might consider the brand if the founder considers it for him- or herself.

The differentiating aspects of the offers, stemming from the founder's needs, are often also in line with Hill, McGrath and Dayal's (1998) differentiating framework, where the brands offer increases convenience in the form of improved access to a product or increases customization, such as products developed for certain needs.

The concepts have a strong emphasis on social or environmental benefits

Developing a brand (partially) focusing on social or environmental benefits develops brand associations of caring. It can lead to loyal customers, who share the values of the brand and choose the brand to contribute to a certain cause. There are a few examples from the study where brands encourage their customers to contribute to a social or environmental concern in other ways than financial, which generates brand resonance. Since the brand will also be seen in forums concerning the certain cause and will build associations to it, it gets a proprietary asset as it increases its number of touch-points and can increase the number of cues for the brand to be recalled: Instead of just being recalled when asking for a juice brand, the brand can also be an example of a brand donating to charity.

In a way, this kind of "caring" part of a brand can also be seen as an irrelevant attribute, as it sometimes gives the product a perceived quality increase (in some dimension): It is easy to associate responsibility in one aspect (e.g. donating shoes to children in need or exclusively using non-GMO produce) with responsibility in another (e.g. choosing environmental-friendly colouring materials or having a low sugar content).

Also, if not managing to live up to the expectations in the work for a cause, it can damage the brand's credibility.

Avoiding traditional marketing

By avoiding traditional marketing, brands choose to lower the general awareness in favour of efficiently reaching their target audience. It can also in itself be a statement that gives the customers certain associations, for example that the brand is current or a smaller player with a "soul". Doing something differently is common for new-luxury

brands but avoiding traditional marketing specifically has been identified also among other sorts of brands in the study.

Choosing alternative marketing channels can also subconsciously increase the brands' credibility as the target customers are reached on their own terms: "This brand is for people like me because we meet at the places where I prefer to be." This can likely lead to a brand being more considered by its target market.

Marketing brand instead of product range

Marketing the brand and its values instead of its products is done to establish the "right" associations to the brand and increase brand recognition. This in turn can lead to an increased credibility for the products as the brand is seen in the "right" contexts. If successful, it can even be a way to increase brand resonance, since the customers will have to seek up the product range themselves, such as through the brand website.

The brand as it's known today was initially a business extension

When a brand's product range has evolved from another primary business, the products are likely enabled through customer loyalty.

Also, the (perceived) quality of the product can be high as there is a client base, which has used the brand's services for the same function as the product now provides. This also gives the brand credibility.

If a brand isn't considered, an extension might be considered. An example of this could be customers who don't consider themselves as people going to an exclusive salon. However, they might consider themselves as people using a hair product.

This also connects with the framework for differentiating commodities as convenience is increased (because of better access to the brand) as well as customization (since the brand often can be consumed in more ways).

Trade shows

By attending trade shows, brands develop their awareness breadth (depending on which trade shows they choose to attend), recall *and* recognition at once (for retailers). By attending, they can gain credibility in their segment while the space at the show can give them a proprietary asset. Retailers can form an opinion on whether or not to consider the brand if they get to know it,

The emphasis on making the booth stand out from the crowd and showing the products from their very best side are ways to develop the "right" associations of the brand. A giant booth might give the impression of being a well-established company for example.

Outsourcing distribution and marketing

The choice of outsourcing some activities (separated from the results of that choice) is likely less relevant for branding purposes. However, it *does* allow the firms to put more effort into branding and their offerings, which could lead to increasing credibility as these brands are able to say: "We focus on what we're doing best."

Merchandise

Offering merchandise increases awareness as loyal customers chooses to resonate with the brand and market it. The companies offering merchandize are likely known for products that are highly involved as customers identify with the brand to such extent that they want to market it - not only for free but by paying for it.

Shopping experience

By developing the shopping experience into something extraordinary, credibility can be achieved as the staff can mirror the expertise that the brands claim to have. This can also lead to loyal customers who not only buy the products because of the products themselves but also because they enjoy the actual purchase moment.

This experience might also function as an irrelevant attribute since the fact that someone has picked out a certain product for a customer could make him or her believe that it works better. This has the potential to generate extremely loyal customers, especially since these products are often highly involved products, such as skin care used in a daily beauty regimen.

Developing a shopping experience based on the sales representatives' expert advice is also an example of how to increase customization through service.

Story-telling

By telling stories, brands establish strong associations in their customers' minds. These have potential to establish a high (perceived) quality of the products, for example that bottled water from the Fiji Islands is more natural than any other water, which should most likely be seen as an irrelevant attribute. Storytelling will likely also expand brand recall even to cues about the interesting stories.

Collaboration to create marketing material

If collaborating with an artist for creating marketing material, customers will form new associations and possibly also think of the brand as being more credible, since it has managed to be promoted by someone who's credible within his or her field.

Free samples

By offering free samples, more people might consider the brand. It's also a statement about the products' quality, implying that it's so high-quality that the brand is sure customers will love it and buy it if they get to try it.

Close customer relationships

With close customer relationships, brands can get loyal customers to interact with the brand. It can lead to associations of the brand being caring and humble and shows an example of how products can be differentiated through increased customization, if they are developed based on consumer needs.

Rebellious act

Brands that are counter-reactions to a custom can bring a number of different associations to the customers. The examples in the study show associations to "being on the customers' side".

Launching imperfect products

Several companies in the study started with launching products (or manufacturing processes) that had to be improved. This is likely done in order to spread brand awareness but it also risks the brand's credibility and (perceived) quality and could result in negative brand associations.

Reinvesting profit to buy larger batches

A successful business that once started small and has grown in smaller steps, gives credibility to its products' perceived quality, as there has been a growing demand. If the products are only sold in small quantities that sell out, they also give the impression of being exclusive, even if that low quantity is based on cash-flow issues more than anything else.

Unconventional sales channels

By selling a product in a way that's more usual for another product segment, brand awareness can be broadened. It also leads new associations to the brand and customers in other segments might consider the brand's product.

In some cases, the unconventional sales channel is a way to increase convenience but in others it can (from a branding perspective) be seen as an irrelevant attribute: "Is the quality and taste of candy really that much better just because it's sold next to a designer chair?"

No Logo

Without logotypes, the brand establishes associations and an image of not relying on something superficial. Because of this, the brand has the potential to increase its products' perceived quality, as the products are claimed to speak for themselves.

Spokesperson almost equal to the brand

Spokespersons that are strongly connected to a brand bring the same benefits and risks as brand influencers in general and give the brand a huge proprietary asset since it will more likely be shown in different channels such as magazines and TV.

The brands were created to fill a gap in a current trend

Developing a brand with a current trend in mind is in a way risky as it isn't a long-lasting strategy. That being said, by connecting the brand associations to an on-going trend, the awareness depth can increase and the likelihood of getting attention increases as the field in which the brand claims to belong is discussed. Furthermore, people who are already in awe of a trend might also consider the new brand entering the market.

Founder / Author

By publishing a book in the field that the brand operates, the credibility of the brand can increase. It can also improve brand recall, as the brand can now also come to mind when given the cue authors. It's also a way of increasing customization through service as the book can provide additional information of how to use the brand's products.

Product-centered business expanding into offering services

Businesses who offer services in connection to their products show examples of differentiation through customized services. It's also a way to broaden brand awareness and strengthen brand recall as the brand can be considered in more situations and segments.

Concept before product

For brands where the concept has been more important than the product (according to the founders), key is likely to establish the right associations and image that the potential customers will want to identify themselves with, no matter in what way.

Starting globally

By starting globally, a brand focuses on developing its brand depth. It can also improve the brand's credibility of delivering something in a safe and reliable manner, as international businesses traditionally have been well-established organizations. Lastly, by offering worldwide accessibility, the brand differentiates its business by increasing convenience through service.

5.2 Analysis of Differentiating Attributes

Recurring design attribute other than label

By forming a coherent look of a brand's products, brand recognition can increase as a given aesthetic can be connected to the brand. The chosen design features can also help generate the "right" associations. These two results can in turn lead to a clearer brand image.

Irrelevant attribute

Irrelevant attributes generate associations leading to expectations on what the product can do. This is a risk, as the perceived quality might not correspond to those high expectations but the frequent use of this strategy among differentiated brands show that it is an effective method to differentiate a brand.

5.3 Analysis of Protection

It's striking that many of the brands have IPRs that cover aspects of the business that aren't relevant to their core value proposition: Most brands' utility patents for example, are related to details and functions that don't contribute to the brands' differentiation (in the eyes of the consumer).

In accordance with Chasser and Wolfe (2010), the more different kinds of protection, the better, also in this study. Of the brands that are covered by three or four different IPRs (one being trade dress protection), none are experiencing counterfeit. With less than three different sorts of IPRs however, the control is weakened.

That being said, only one third of the brands have additional IPRs to their trademark protections (and domain names): Of the total fourteen brands experiencing counterfeit and/or infringement issues, six of them only have trademark protection. This means that of all the brands only protecting their brands and goods through registered

trademarks, about one third encounters problems with claiming control. On the other hand, because of the brands' products differentiated yet still close-to-generic state (at least from a manufacturing perspective), most brands have encountered very similar products from other companies on the market. The lack of but need for control is especially evident in *Beauty, Care & Cleaning*, indicating that the importance of protecting a brand varies with the category it belongs to. Similarly, brands within *Accessories & Useful Objects* are overrepresented in counterfeit and infringement cases, and therefore likely more exposed to control-related issues.

For brands experiencing infringement, having a trademark including trade dress protection has according to the study proved to work best. There's not a solid track record though, as one trade dress protection has also been invalidated when trying to claim its right against an infringer.

Also, the different sorts of IPRs won't help if too many of them are irrelevant in relation to what's being infringed. As an example, several brands that have both trademark protection as well as patent protection (utility patent *or* design patent) have still not been successful in protecting their products, likely since the patent protections haven't protected the aspects that have been infringed.

6. Conclusion

This chapter provides a summary of the thesis procedure and highlights the conclusions drawn from the analysed results (Chapter 5. Analysis), answering the research questions. Lastly it provides a discussion about potential risks with the thesis.

6.1 Summary of thesis procedure

This thesis has investigated which branding and control activities are most common among firms that have differentiated generic products (or services) and what their intentions are. A theoretical framework was developed, highlighting important concepts concerning branding and intellectual property. A literature review was then conducted, exploring the importance of differentiating products, how it can be achieved and what intellectual property's role in this process looks like. A study investigating branding-related activities and control activities was made on 30 brands that have managed to differentiate generic products (or services). From this, the most common activities among the studied brands were highlighted and analysed in the light of the literature review and the theoretical framework. The process resulted in the following insights.

6.2 Answers to the research questions

RQ1: Which activities are most common for differentiating generic products (or services)?

Although hard to avoid, activities seem to first and foremost be done to strengthen the brand image through associations. This in turn seems to often have an effect on the brands' credibility.

Another common denominator among the activities is that they expand the brand awareness, either in depth or breadth. The latter leads to more potential customers considering the brand, as the awareness breadth might have expanded to a category where they consider brands.

Many of the study's identified activities generate increased customization or convenience (or both), which are acknowledged strategies for differentiating commodities. However, there are also activities that do the opposite, such as decreasing convenience, in favour of establishing an exclusive brand image. This, together with most brands' focus on evoking associations and their common use of irrelevant attributes could indicate that a brand itself is far more important (for gaining customers) than its value proposition.

For gaining a proprietary asset, besides using control mechanisms, most brands seem to increase their exposure by teaming up with either a person or another brand in order to be seen via their touch-points as well as their own.

With many different activities encouraging brand resonance and loyalty among customers, strengthening the bonds with the target audience also seems to be one of the highest priorities among the studied brands.

RQ2: What is common practice for claiming control over differentiated generic products (or services) and how well does it work?

Control activity is in many cases low, solely relying on trademarks as IPRs. It seems like the more different forms of IPRs, the more control. If only choosing a few different IPRs, the study shows that adding a trade dress protection to a brand's collection of trademarks can lessen the damage in case of infringement. Brands would benefit from focusing more on protecting their actual differentiating aspects, but the risk of being infringed also depends on the category to which the brands' offerings belong.

6.3 Risks

The main risk with the conclusions in this thesis is that the study might not have been extensive enough to generalize the result. The author did experience saturation in the results and then continued the study in order to make sure it wasn't a coincidence. It is still possible though, that if the study had been significantly larger, the identified common denominators could have been more finely separated into more categories. In other words: There's a risk that the common denominators identified in this study wouldn't have been gathered if the number of studied brands had been much bigger.

The other risk with this thesis is that the data has been gathered and interpreted by one person. As the data has needed interpretation, there's a risk that the author has misunderstood. In order to diminish that risk, the author has in many cases used several different sources to extract one piece of information. The author has also provided the studied data in its entirety (Appendix I) allowing the reader to draw its own conclusions from it.

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Appendix I

The following data has been used for the study, presented in the thesis above. The following data also contains quotes and in some cases direct translations. More information about the sources can be found in Chapter 7. References.

Company	aesop
Founder's background	Hair-dresser (Fairs, 2012)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	poetic skincare brand with a focus on both organic and artificial (but always the best) ingredients, mild and respectful to nature and people and with an interest in the intellectual and artistic world. (Aesop, n.d.; Haldemann, 2015)
Creative collaborations	Lucy McRae (body architect) for making a collaborative artsy short film (Aesop.com, n.d.)
	Partnered with gallery Odd One Out to present an exhibition (ODD ONE OUT, n.d.)
	Partnered with gallery Odd One Out to present an exhibition (ODD ONE OUT, n.d.)
Product development	skin-care products (including hair & body) that are made only of the best botanical ingredients, focus on antioxidants.
	Emphasize on research and being independent and not tied to any specific research center. As a result, they have their own lab (Aesop.com, n.d.)
	All products are made in Australia (Aesop.com, n.d.)
"Strategies"	it started with hair-care while the founder was still a hair-dresser and then developed into more. (Fairs, 2012)
	First in Australia, then expanded to other countries. (Fairs, 2012)
	Each store should be unique and a part of its surroundings. (Fairs, 2012)
Launch	it started with hair-care while the founder was still a hair-dresser and then developed into more. (Fairs, 2012)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Sold online, in their own stores and at selected resellers (Aesop.com, n.d.)
	Much thought is put into the stores' designs, taking up the vibe of the locations surrounding instead of having a fixed store design. They also have a website dedicated to the store design, called Taxonomy of Design (Aesop - Taxonomy of Design, n.d.)

Marketing/PR	Artistic films, (Aesop.com, n.d.)
	Aesop Nasotèque: An installation shown in one of their shopping windows (Aesop.com, n.d.)
	The Fabulist: An online "magazine" featuring writer's articles and stories. Each issue has the same categories, named to seem related to Aesop products but in fact having nothing to do with the brand. (Aesop.com, n.d.)
	nonaggressive and quiet marketing - no advertising (Haldemann, 2015)
	All stores are unique, adapted to their environment (Fairs, 2012; Haldemann, 2015)
Control activities	trademarks and service marks

Company	American Apparel
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	"standardized" single-colored clothes (Store.americanapparel.net, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept development	Controversially advertized, mid-priced, "plain" garments manufactured solely in America
Creative collaborations	American Apparel has a limited edition collection where the garments have prints inspired by the American artist Peter Max.
	A collection in collaboration with French designer and artist Nathalie du Pasquier
Product development	From importing T-shirts made in the US to Canada to manufacturing all kinds of basic garments
	60 minute-delivery of basic garments
"Strategies"	All clothes are made in the western world and manufacturers are paid higher than the minimum wage. thanks to the "local" production, the brand can more quickly react to trends. (Mathew, n.d.)
	The brand's controversial advertizing and aesthetics became so established that it became more of its "trademark" than their social responsibility actions.
	No logos
Launch	Started as a spare-time project, importing USA-made T-shirts with a vintage feel to sell in Canada. (Mathew, n.d.; Zerbo, 2015)
	Initially sold through wholesale
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Initially soled through wholesale (Zerbo, 2015)
	Online and through the brand's own stores, opening too many too fast in order to grow brand awareness, which led to a need to close down several stores (Zerbo, 2015)
Marketing/PR	Controversial advertizing with photographs of girls, with very little - if any - clothes on, taken in an undone snap shot-style, without photoshopping. (This eventually went over board as American Apparel's models got less and less clothes with more and more suggestive poses over time)
	The models were, the brand argues, "real people", working in the Americal Apparel stores, found through their website, friends of the owner or similar (Zerbo, 2015)
Control activities	Trademarks
Similar products / disputes	A lot of counterfeit products (VII, 2015)

Company	blis spa
Founder's background	Personal trainer
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	Poetic waxing (Blissworld.com, n.d.)
Concept Development	Sprung from the founder's own acne-prone skin and how badly treated she felt by the facialist when getting a facial, Bliss SPA is SPA chain with a product line sold at resellers and online. (Evans, 2012)
	There's a lot of humor and puns in the products' names (NYMag.com, n.d.; Blissworld.com, n.d.)
Creative collaborations	Kate Spade make up case (Tomlin, 2013)
Product development	The product development is driven from the expertise and knowledge acquired in the spas (Blissworld.com, n.d.)
"Strategies"	Sought-after SPA with a star clientele and available products for every woman to have her own Bliss Spa experience (Blissworld.com, n.d.)
	Combining different products to perfectly suit the Spa-goer's needs lead to increased sales (NYMag.com, n.d.)
Launch	Word-of-mouth: Practiced on her model sister and her model friends. The agency started sending more models to get her facials which led to actresses and stylists contacting her too (Taylor, 2013)
	Word-of-mouth: Practiced on her model sister and her model friends. The agency started sending more models to get her facials which led to actresses and stylists contacting her too (Taylor, 2013)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Spa chain and a product range that is sold at resellers and online. (Blissworld.com, n.d.)
Marketing/PR	Word-of-mouth: Practiced on her model sister and her model friends. The agency started sending more models to get her facials which led to actresses and stylists contacting her too (Taylor, 2013)
	Because of the celebrities, Bliss has become a sought-after Spa with a half year-long waitinglist. (NYMag.com, n.d.)
	Through the early model clientele, Bliss could develop a contact network with people in the women's magazine business and gets a lot of publicity in the magazines (NYMag.com, n.d.)
Control activities	Fill in the price gap between your product and possible copies.(Evans, 2012)
	Trademarks and service marks

Company	Bread & Boxers
Founder's background	Henrik Lindahl: architect, for example for H&M's stores Alexander Palmgren: Unknown
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	<p>Grab-&-go for everyday basics They wanted good basics (everyday staples) to be more accessible</p> <p>One early morning in 2009 two Swedish friends woke up in a hotel room on the other side of the Atlantic while their baggage with all their everyday favorites was, well, not there. Although that day did not start out very well, by nightfall Bread & Boxers was founded. (Breadandboxersusa.com, n.d.)</p>
	they hate logos (Johansson, 2013)
Creative collaborations	"Henrik Lundqvist Favorites" (Henrik Lundqvist was a friend of the founders and is now also a partner) (Nordiska Kompaniet, 2014) (Weiss, 2015)
	Seasonal Capsule Collections with Lundqvist (Breadandboxersusa.com, n.d.)
	Henrik Lundqvist as the spokesperson for the brand (Prnewswire.com, 2014)
Product development	Thought-through design, made to be extra comfortable with printed washing-instructions instead of itchy tags and made to have its best fit AFTER washing by making the t-shirts longer so that they can shrink. (Breadandboxers.se, n.d.; Johansson, 2013)
	Thought-through design, made to be extra comfortable with printed washing-instructions instead of itchy tags and made to have its best fit AFTER washing by making the t-shirts longer so that they can shrink. (Breadandboxers.se, n.d.; Johansson, 2013)

	<p>Some garments come in bread bags since fresh baked bread in the morning gives a great feeling (Johansson, 2013)</p> <p>Other packaging is made to resemble everyday grocery staples. (Breadandboxersusa.com, n.d.)</p>
"Strategies"	<p>In 2014: Launch in America with getting Lundqvist on board (Johansson, 2013; Prnewswire.com, 2014)</p>
Launch	<p>Started as an extension of the mini bar, a life saver for light travelers, or if you will, room service at its best. We successfully launch of a line of underwear favorites, including boxers, panties and socks, at first only accessible in hotel rooms. (Breadandboxersusa.com, n.d.)</p>
Sales channels / Distribution channels	<p>Hotel mini-bars, airports, stores (Johansson, 2013)</p>
	<p>soon emails from hotel guests started to drop in with inquires on where to buy their new favorite underwear a bit closer to home. Since 2011, an extended collection of everyday basics can be found in selected stores throughout Europe, the US and Asia (Breadandboxersusa.com, n.d.)</p>
	<p>In USA: United Legwear Co. (ULC) have the exclusive right to manufacture, sell and distribute the brand (Prnewswire.com, 2014)</p>
Marketing/PR	<p>Henrik Lundqvist is the face of the brand and also creates collections and.... They've also spread the word of their brand during Nightingale Under Days where a marketing agency told the stories behind various different brands and connected it with press, influencers, retailers etc. (Nightingale, n.d.)</p>
	<p>Started selling the Lundqvist Favorites collection exclusively to NK in Stockholm and Gothenburg (Nordiska Kompaniet, 2014)</p>
Control activities	<p>Trademarks</p>

Company	Bumble & Bumble
Founder's background	Hair-dresser & salon owner
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	Hair dresser's invisible oil (Bumble and bumble., n.d.) Surf Infusion (Bumble and bumble., n.d.)
Concept Development	Every aspect of the organization is made in-house (Bumbleandbumble.com, n.d.)
	A need to do things differently to other salons (Into The Gloss, 2016)
	A brand who introduced styling products for hair-dressers to use in editorial work (Boots.com, n.d.)
Creative collaborations	Fashion Week: BB stylists using BB products for various designer shows (Bumbleandbumble.com, n.d.)
Product development	Every aspect of the organization is made in-house (Bumbleandbumble.com, n.d.)
"Strategies"	A high-end salon with a more relaxed atmosphere and lower prices (Into The Gloss, 2016)
	Focus on styling products instead of shampoo and conditioner (Into The Gloss, 2016)
Launch	With a good contact network with people doing editorials for the magazine, the salon saw an opportunity to create a range of products for them to use (Into The Gloss, 2016)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	BB salons and selected salons, apothecaries, stores and online (Bumbleandbumble.com, n.d.; Elcompanies.com, n.d.)
	Explicitly avoid super markets and drugstore chains and recommend their clients to stay away from BB products sold at such places since they can be counterfeited or old. (Bumbleandbumble.com, n.d.)
Marketing/PR	The salon got popular after a review in Vogue, which led to more publicity (Into The Gloss, 2016)
	With a good contact network with people doing editorials for the magazine, the salon saw an opportunity to create a range of products for them to use (Into The Gloss, 2016)

Similar products/Disputes	Counterfeited products (Amazon.com, 2010)
	"Gray market" for salon care products as they're not always completely plagiarized but can also be dilluted original products or original products that are sold after they've expired. (Xovain.com, 2014)
Control activities	A plea to their customers on their website to only buy from retailers found through the website and a message not to buy the products at super drug store chains or supermarket chains (Bumbleandbumble.com, n.d.)
	Trademarks

Company	Cheap Monday
Founder's background	Örjan Andersson worked for ten years at JC, then he started Weekend - a second hand-store with some new brands too. Started it together with a colleague and had only open during weekends. It was successful so they started Weekday. (SvD.se, 2008)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	"revolution against expensive jeans" (Berthling, 2006) – It was trendy to wear expensive jeans and brands increased their prices. A reaction against it was needed. After the launch of Cheap Monday, a few new brands have entered the market, offering cheap jeans too. (Almegård, 2009)
	"- There has always been companies selling cheap jeans but they tried to package them in an expensive way. We are straight-forward and call ourselves Cheap Monday." (Julander, 2006)
Product development	The skinny silhouette has become an iconic look for Cheap Monday but there are other models as well. (Almegård, 2009)
Launch	They bought as few pairs as they were allowed and could afford (800 pairs). They sold out quickly and the profit was reinvested into 5000 new pairs. The delivery was delayed so in the meantime people could be written on a waiting list. When the jeans arrived people had to stand in line for the changing booth for hours. (SvD.se, 2008)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Initially just the founders' own store Weekend (later turned into Weekday) (SvD.se, 2008)
	They wanted to establish Weekday in stores that otherwise were selling more expensive clothes. It seems to have worked. (Almegård, 2009)

	<p>online tool allowing retailers to view and order express collections (smaller collections between the main collections) (Schori, 2011)</p>
	<p>started small and grew from that. From only selling from their own store, Cheap Monday jeans are now sold worldwide. (SvD.se, 2008)</p>
Marketing/PR	<p>Initially building their reputation through PR and parties and later through their shows at Stockholm Fashion Week, Cheap Monday had deliberately avoided marketing the brand in a traditional way. (Moorethought.co.uk, 2015)</p>
	<p>en year anniversary was celebrated with a 10 min pop-up store handing out jeans for free in exchange for being mentioned in social media. (Bane, 2014)</p>
	<p>Debated in media since the logo initially had a cross in the forehead claimed to be "anti cristian". The founders did not take it too seriously. (Berthling, 2006)</p> <p>They later changed the logo</p>
	<p>They've chosen other ways of marketing than the traditional ones since they seem a bit too "glossy" for cheap monday. (Bliznac, 2012)</p>
	<p>"Cheap Monday Sneak Peek Shop" - pop up webshop selling pieces from the collection a few days before the actual fashion show. Secret codes to enter are given to fans and selected customers. This is the exact opposite of the tradition in fashion which is very careful not to disclose anything before the show. (Hanspers, 2012)</p>

	<p>Mostly PR, lending samples to magazines and events in the stores. (Schori, 2011)</p> <p>Under the theme of "Bondage Construction," the brand invaded a total of thirteen Weekday and Cheap Monday stores in Paris, Stockholm and many places in between. They covered their boutiques in plastic film and vinyl, for an S&M-meets-science-camp feeling, and threw a party in each store to show off a special preview of their limited edition jeans customized with straps, hooks and bleach. "The price is the same as always, but every pair is customized by hand in our office." (Pfeiffer, 2010)</p>
	<p>Cheap Monday hires local PR agencies when entering new markets abroad. PR is made in-house in Sweden. (Schori, 2011)</p>
Control activities	Trademarks

Company	Chobani
Founder's background	cheese company owner (Bhasin, 2012)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	A "banner" right below the lid (Chobani, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	Portion-sized naturally-flavored NON-GMO greek yoghurt sold " to the masses" in the US (Chobani, n.d.) (Prasso, 2011)
Product development	New flavors (Chobani, n.d.)
	Additional yoghurt brand dedicated to target children (Bhasin, 2012)
"Strategies"	Chobani hasn't aimed to become a high-end brand but instead one of the other yoghurt brands, put on the shelves next to the other yoghurt brands in regular stores Close relationship to the customers through social media and from feedback sent on Chobani's website (Prasso, 2011)
	Direct contact with the customers through social media and from feedback sent via Chobani's website (Prasso, 2011)
	The founder shares with his coworkers (Josephs, 2016)
Launch	Started selling to individual stores and after a while got into the larger chains (Bhasin, 2012)
	When trying to get the product into individual stores, they always brought samples for the people they were meeting with. (Needleman, 2012)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Large supermarkets and smaller stores in the US (Bhasin, 2012)
Marketing/PR	Reached out to bloggers and used social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, aimin to have direct contact with the customers (Bhasin, 2012) (Prasso, 2011)
	Truck with samples, attending festivals etc. (Bhasin, 2012)
	Nowadays also TV commecial is used (Bhasin, 2012)
Control activities	Trademarks including trade dress
	Design Patent for a container overwrap

Company	Daniel Wellington
Founder's background	smalslips.se, other watch brand
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	completely round dial without digits, the metal closing mechanism with engraved logo (Danielwellington.com, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	Classy Oxford (Danielwellington.com, n.d.)
Concept Development	(Fictitious?) character is the inspiration of the brand. Storytelling about the man behind the watch. (Danielwellington.com, n.d.)
	Tysander picked a good moment to build a watch brand. After dipping during the financial crisis, the industry has grown every year since. (Pulvirent, 2015)
	Changeable straps in order to change the appearance of the watch to a lower price (Danielwellington.com, n.d.)
Launch	They seeded out thousands of watches to numerous bloggers in different sectors and offered their fans a unique/personalised 15%-20% discount code for their fans to buy the watches directly from DW's official site (of course, they do free shipping to lower the barrier). (iagegracefully, 2015)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	At first, Tysander began selling the watch online in Sweden and through local storefronts. (Pulvirent, 2015)
	A year later he came to New York to find American partners, and now the watches are carried in major department stores as well as at niche fashion boutiques. (Pulvirent, 2015)
	Soon after, the DW team began attending Baselworld, the industry's largest trade show, held each spring in Switzerland. (Pulvirent, 2015)
	Unlike other brands that aim to stay exclusive by not selling to any old shop, DW will distribute to most retailers that want its product. (Pulvirent, 2015)
	wants to expand into places such as Africa that are underserved by the watch market. (Pulvirent, 2015)

	The company also has a habit of giving its product away for free, specifically to social-media stars and prominent personalities. Tysander refuses to pay for traditional advertising, instead working with thousands of bloggers, celebrities, and other “influencers” worldwide. (Pulvirent, 2015)
Marketing/PR	
Control activities	trademarks and service marks

Company	Fiji Water
Founder's background	David Gilmour, a businessman with interests in hotels, real estate and gold mining (Jakarta Globe, n.d.)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	the square shape of the bottle (Store.fijiwater.com, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	Fiji water (FIJI Water, n.d.)
Concept Development	Fiji is very far from most markets and customers. This physical inaccessibility has provided Fiji Water to create the story of this water being extracted from a virgin ecosystem far from acid rain, herbicides, pesticides and other pollutants and filtered naturally for years through layers of silica, basalt and sandstone. This journey from the atmosphere to bottling – something unique for consumers to sit up and take notice of – is communicated clearly through packaging and exquisitely on the company's website. (Martin Roll, 2014)
	Complementing the story of the water itself, the brand of Fiji itself has long been known as an unexploited land full of tropical forest surrounded by coral reefs, unpolluted by the modern world's necessary evils and was protected by nature. These factors created a very strong myth about the brand amongst the customers who, in turn, perpetuate the mythology that built the brand. (Martin Roll, 2014) Fiji Water created their brand by riding the coattails of brand equity already established by the Fiji name (Dean, 2010)
	The Fiji Water consumer is really buying—in addition to pure clean water—a healthy lifestyle enveloped by the idea of tranquility and beauty associated with a pristine tropical rainforest. Nature provides credibility to Fiji Natural Artesian Water. (Dean, 2010)
Product development	By coming out with an award-winning slippery silver bottle design, Fiji water has been able to replace Evian in many of the top-end restaurants. (Martin Roll, 2014)

	<p>A strong connection with film stars and other artists has even inspired new features such as a straw-cap, which was a minor, but meaningful innovation that came from observing how celebrities would modify their bottles so that they could sip without messing up their makeup (Martin Roll, 2014)</p> <p>OBS! Patenterat! (Fiji Water Company, 2015)</p>
	<p>The square bottle is easily recognized and positively associated with the product—Fiji Natural Artesian Water. The full experience associated with consuming water from an artesian aquifer at the very edge of a rainforest starts with a sophisticated label. Instead of a simple tag, Fiji Water draws the consumer into an environment of palm leaves and Hibiscus blooms. The multi-dimensional labeling technique entices the consumer to purchase and consume the contents.</p> <p>(Dean, 2010)</p>
	<p>subscriptions...</p> <p>(Store.fijiwater.com, n.d.)</p>
"Strategies"	<p>Fiji Water's pricing strategies offered distributors as well as retailers the opportunity to make profits in a category that they had become used to not making any money in when selling a commodity product.</p> <p>(Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
Launch	<p>Fiji Water launched slowly and selectively in the US through exclusive outlets in Los Angeles and Palm Springs.</p> <p>(Ritson, 2008)</p> <p>The first prong of Fiji Water's communication strategy was building personal relationships with the chefs of leading restaurants, resorts and spas to promote the buy-in of the brand. Gilmour used his contacts in the hotel industry to pitch his product to the top-end hotels, resorts and restaurants.</p> <p>(Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
	<p>because Fiji Water's bottles were often off the shelves due to their early inability to match huge initial demand, this added to the brand's feel of exclusivity</p> <p>(Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
	<p>Fiji Water first appeared in New York, for example, on the menu at Jean-Georges, an elite restaurant in Manhattan. It was priced \$10 a litre and presented to diners in a solid silver Fiji Water serving case.</p> <p>(Ritson, 2008)</p>

<p>Sales channels / Distribution channels</p>	<p>Through this controlled distribution strategy in line with its positioning of a high-end product, Fiji Water has ensured that it is available at the best hotels, resorts and spas used by the leading stars and managed to get chef's recommendations. (Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
<p>Marketing/PR</p>	<p>Fiji Water did not resort to the usual mass media advertising for its product launch. To this day, Fiji does very little traditional advertising and continues to emphasise a two-pronged strategy – building strategic relationships and careful product placement. (Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
	<p>The second prong of communication was placing the product in leading Hollywood movies and other high-profile events to associate the brand with an elite community, attract attention and to create buzz. Fiji Water has resorted to product placement as a major channel of promotion and brand building. By hiring Creative Entertainment Services, a Hollywood marketing consulting firm, Fiji has been able to fit in Fiji Water bottles in scripts of many major Hollywood movies. These exposures to the brand, when combined with the exciting mythical story, have made the brand noticeable. (Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
	<p>Fiji Water has also sponsored many local events such as golf tournaments, sailing regattas, and musical events. Fiji Water is regularly front and centre as official water sponsors and exclusive partners of events such as the Toronto International Film Festival, New York Fashion Week and Screen Actors Guild Awards. (Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
	<p>With a brand community of loyal, highly visible customers, Fiji water bottles appear in magazines constantly and appear to be one of chosen water brands of many stars without having to sponsor them directly. (Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
	<p>Launched in 2007, the Fiji Water Foundation is a charitable trust funded and supported by the owners, employees and corporate affiliates of Fiji Water. The Fiji Water Foundation is one of the largest philanthropic organizations in Fiji and has focused its efforts and investments on three priority areas of development: rent vatten, education & health care... (Martin Roll, 2014)</p>

	<p>Since 2009, Fiji Water has been a proud member of 1% for the Planet, a growing movement of more than 1,000 companies that donate 1% of their sales to a global network of organizations committed to the preservation and restoration of the natural environment.</p> <p>(Martin Roll, 2014)</p>
	<p>Gave out bottles to 25000 people in three different areas but focus was not on just handing them out but to inform about the STORY behind the water.</p> <p>(Sorrells, 2012)</p>
Control activities	Trademark including trade dress and wordmark
	Utility patent for straw cap
Control-related issues	Fiji has enforced its trademark rights (and won) several times, suing competitor with either similar names or similar packaging. (FoodBev, 2008; Fuchs, 2010)

Company	Gasp
Founder's background	body building, imported clothing brands such as Better Bodies, then licensed more and more until eventually taking over the entire brand. (BODY, 2012)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	They wanted to do something for their core customers, not forgetting where they came from (things had gotten a bit too pastel blue with Better Bodies brand) (BODY 2012)
	GASP products are not made for everybody at the gym – It's only for the most dedicated athletes! (Gasp.nu, n.d.)
Product development	USA is a key factor in the work with GASP since that's where most trends come from within fitness. They wanted to export TO the states instead of importing from it. If succeeding in America, the success will spread. So even if focusing on USA, you will also focus on Europe. (BODY, 2012)
	Product development, design, marketing and distribution is done in-house (Atrox.se, n.d.)
	Production in different countries but Swedish design (Body, 2012)
"Strategies"	If being in the sports retail stores you easily become a poor version of Nike since the stores require that you should offer certain products and have certain campaigns. so they decided to look outside Sweden and instead focusing on exporting to other countries. (Body, 2012)
	USA is a key factor in the work with GASP since that's where most trends come from within fitness. They wanted to export TO the states instead of importing from it. If succeeding in America, the success will spread. So even if focusing on USA, you will also focus on Europe. (BODY, 2012)

Launch	GASP was something of an Immediate success and proved to be more efficient than Better Bodies. (Body, 2012)
	At first,it was, in total, a bit of a backlash but you have to be brave if you want to be more nische oriented. (Body, 2012)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	dedicated fitness stores and online stores
Marketing/PR	The business is run by the most prominent fitness profiles in USA (Atrox.se, n.d.)
	Attending fairs and events (Gasp.nu, n.d.)
	cometition sponsorship (Gasp.nu, n.d.)
	GASP sponsors ambassadors (Gasp.nu, n.d.)
Control activities	trademarks

Company	Happy Plugs
Core values	Happy company with happy visions: simplicity right from the start, a great portion of happiness and minimalistic and clean design (Happy Plugs, n.d.)
Founder's background	Web design and founded lifestyle community Glife. He's also worked with online video business Headweb (Zackrisson, 2015)
	He has founded 5 companies including an online charity website and social media networks before Facebook. He has never sold a business. (Snickars, 2014)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	headphones packaged as a music note (Happy Plugs, n.d.) "standardized" single-colored headphones and tech accessories (Happy Plugs, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	He already had a concept in mind: "What colour are you today?" (Zackrisson, 2015)
	choosing headphones as the concept carrier was decided later when his girlfriend wondered why there were only black and white Apple headphones. (Zackrisson, 2015)
Product development	special packaging, where the headphones look like a music note (Happy Plugs, n.d.)
	the brand has been awarded both for its packaging and its products (Guldknappen, in the accessory category) (Happy Plugs, n.d.)
Launch	toured with a pair of painted apple headphones and tried to sell before having a production (Zackrisson, 2015)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Online, own store in Mall of Scandinavia

Marketing/PR	Primarily marketing through PR since they more easily reach their target group that way. Close collaborations with PR agencies who do most of the PR-related work for them. The most important thing is to give a coherent image no matter which channel or which touchpoints (Snickars, 2014)
	sometimes collaborations with influencers and bloggers, who often-times are the one contacting Happy plugs instead of the other way around. (Snickars, 2014)
	They try to be present on most social media platforms. Primarily Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. They also try to be on platforms such as Wanelo och Fancy. They have ambassadors in all media channels which helps spreading the brand to all platforms. (Snickars, 2014)
Control activities	design patents for their packaging
	Trademarks including trade dress protection
	They browse social media in order to stay up to date with their competitors and tendencies in the world (Snickars, 2014)
Competing/Similar products	They acknowledge that there are others producing very similar headphones but chose to see certain actors in segments other than the smartphone accessory segment as more relevant competitors, since they attract the same audience. (Snickars, 2014)

Company	Happy Socks
Founder's background	advertising business for 10 years, own event agency, realestate in Bali, Graphic design freelancer
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	Single-colored toe and heel (Happysocks.com, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	the name came early: on a long Sunday afternoon in 2008 that Viktor said he had an idea to create colourful socks and call it Happy Socks.
Creative collaborations	they let creative people do what they want instead of describing what THEY want. They don't want any middle hands and instead want to be direct and stright forward (Colin.se, 2013)
	“Actually, it goes both ways. Either they come to us or we go to them. It's usually through someone who knows the other party mutually. For example, if somebody knows Terry Richardson, or someone has a contact with adidas. It's something that's developed through personal contacts. We then start discussing it and if we figure it's a good story, that we can create something to talk about and create a good product, and they're interested in doing it, then we move forward with it.”
	“It has to be something that's not so expected either. Something that's a little bit different. It's something that's very natural when we do it, but it's not the first thing you would think about.”

Product development	<p>“I start doodling things and then it goes into the computer — patterns and patterns — and then I put them into the CAD drawings to see what fits, and then I show it to the sales team and production team and they go killing my darlings. Just joking. But seriously, we don’t want to be so niche, we want to be broad, so we want to make the collection in the end that will work for as many as possible. We don’t follow that much and that’s been our thing from the beginning. We had nobody to follow in the sock world and today we want to continue doing what we like the most. We believe that if we like the socks, then the people around us will like the socks.” (Poh, 2012)</p>
"Strategies"	<p>If only 0.1 per mille would buy, they would be able to earn enough to live off their idea. But they realized that they had to go global in order to succeed. (Ekman, 2012)</p>
	<p>Importantly they set up the company as a global brand, with a global attitude, so that from inception every decision was made with that focus. An example of this is that they concentrate their energy on the creative and the package (they only have 20 staff), and then rely wholly on distributors to get their product out there - they even use a distributor in their native Sweden. While leaving the distribution to the distributors - they do set high standards and give a lot of time ensuring these relationships are right. (Thegoodstube.com, 2012)</p>
Launch	<p>They had a gallery show during fashion week where they put the socks on the wall as if they were paintings. They invited the press and when the exhibition was over they sold all the socks to their friends since they needed money but also wanted to spread the socks and get people o start using them. (Ekman, 2012)</p>
	<p>Simoultaneously, they also launched their website. Happy Socks' marketing activities have mainly been done online. (Ekman, 2012)</p>

	Thanks to their website, they were able to attend fashion trade shows - no other company there were selling socks. They've later been told by other sock companies that their success is due to the fact that they according to the custom did everything wrong. (Ekman, 2012)
	The idea from start was to have an webshop but in the beginning they had to focus more on establishing their brand. That meant that they initially, during the first years, worked hard on finding retailers. After that, the webshop has been developed more and more. (Kiepels, 2014)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	sell through retailer. The idea was to sell the socks in prestigious boutiques in order to position Happy Sock's brand. When that was done they could get an external distributor to continue their work. (Ekman, 2012)
	own webshop (Ekman, 2012)
Marketing/PR	Mostly PR. It's important to build stories around the brand that are fun for people to share. (Winberg, 2014)
Control activities	trademarks
Competing/similar products	Happy Socks were the first to enter - and create - the market for colorful socks and they believe the interest will increase although there are now other actors as well on the market. (Poh, 2012)
	They can claim their right towards companies using the trademark Happy Socks or similar names. They claimed their right in a case where a competitor used the name Socks for Happy People. (Ekman, 2012)
	The problem is instead the companies doing products with <i>similar</i> design, as Happy Socks cannot get a design right on their socks and therefore can't protect them. (Ekman, 2012)

	Century 21 are selling very similar socks, which Happy Socks cannot do anything about. (Ekman, 2012)
	The biggest challenge is trademark and copyright infringement, using the names, images and patterns. (Ekman, 2012)

Company	Herschel Supply Company
Founder's background	Lyndon Cormack & Jamie Cormack, sales representatives for Vans & K2 Sports (Gold, 2013)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	straps and leather details (Herschel Supply Co USA, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	Bags with a nostalgic look made for modern living "A lot of accessories had gone in a nostalgic, retro direction but the founders noticed that this hadn't yet happened in the bags sector, which was still very sports centric." (Gold, 2013)
	A lot of accessories had gone in a nostalgic, retro direction but the founders noticed that this hadn't yet happened in the bags sector, which was still very sports centric. (Gold, 2013)
Creative collaborations	Herschel Supply and Apple have a collaboration where Herschel sells dedicated Apple-compatible products. (Gold, 2013)
	Stüssy, using Stüssy patterns for the Herschel backpacks (Gold, 2013)
	Shoes made with New Balance, as well as a bag with dedicated shoe space (Gold, 2013)
Product development	A wide range of backpacks, pouches, a travel range etc. (Herschel Supply Co USA, n.d.)
"Strategies"	The strategy is to pin-point the market instead of reaching out to the masses and letting that target market feel like they've discovered the brand themselves instead of getting it thrown in their face. (Gold, 2013)
	Inspired by brands they had grown up with like Stussy and New Balance (Gold, 2013)

	The market is not only hipsters but also moms and their children during the "back-to-school" season (Gold, 2013)
	Using agencies to advertize in other countries (Gold, 2013)
Launch	Trade shows all over the world, not just attending but spending a lot of time making sure the products look their very best (Gold, 2013)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Sold in 5000+ stores, many being quite distinct in their target market (such as Colette and Urban Outfitters), department stores, online (Gold, 2013)
Marketing/PR	The strategy is to pin-point the market instead of reaching out to the masses (although they also appear on websites with broader audiences). (Gold, 2013)
	Street wear trade shows called Agenda and advertizing in that trade show's magazine The strategy is to pin-point the market instead of reaching out to the masses. (Gold, 2013)
	Weekly appearances at websites with a specific audience (the brand's target market) (Gold, 2013)
	Strong presence in social media, including a twitter account for customer service (Gold, 2013)
Control activities	trademarks
Control-related issues	They've sued competitors for trade mark infringement and trade mark passing off. (Ippractice.ca, 2015)
	Herschel has also been sued for trademark infringement (Justia Dockets & Filings, 2015)

Company	Innocent Drinks
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	A healthy habit helping people to something good for themselves (Rubin, 2010)
	Smoothies and juices made of natural ingredients only, with a friendly and informal tone (McCahill, 2013; innocent, n.d.)
Product development	From smoothies to juices, coconut water and other tasty healthy drinks, continuing to healthy meals (innocent, n.d.; Rubin, 2010)
"Strategies"	Innocent have an external manufacturer to produce their juices and smoothies (Rubin, 2010)
	10% of the profit is put into Innocent's own charity foundation (O'Reilly, 2014)
Launch	Sold smoothies during a festival that Innocent's target group went to and let them decide whether or not they should start a company (Rubin, 2010)
	Gave out bottles for free to local stores and asked them to call and order more if they sold out. This got them their first customers which helped them land wholesale customers since they could show that they already had a customer base (Rubin, 2010)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Supermarkets, local stores first in UK, continuing with the rest of Europe (Rubin, 2010)
Marketing/PR	Didn't pay for advertising the first 5 years. Instead used the empty space on the bottles to write "silly" messages, establishing Innocent's tone (Rubin, 2010)

	Aimed to get a lot of PR coverage - not always in the most correct manner: Innocent had a meeting with a journalist and did the most out of their security passes as they left samples to all the journalists in the building instead of only the one they were meeting with. (Rubin, 2010)
	Innocent had a van, from which they were giving out free samples and selling food at parks, markets and festivals (O'Reilly, 2014)
	Innocent have had an own festival (innocent, 2009)
	They invite customers to visit their office, try new flavors and give feedback (O'Reilly, 2014)
	Big Knit campaign: Customers are encouraged to knit hats to the Innocent bottles - for each hat, Innocent donates to charity (O'Reilly, 2014)
	Innocent Family - fans getting the Innocent weekly newsletter (Woods, 2006)
Control activities	Trademarks
Control-related issues	Innocent had a dispute with the logo creators about the copyright of the logo (which they won) (Steele, 2015)
	Innocent has also claimed its trademark rights, getting innocent vitamins to change its name. (O'Reilly, 2011)

Company	Lakrids by Johan Bülow
Founder's background	Johan Bülow
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	round shape on candy (Lakrids by Johan Bülow, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	Liquorice turned into a gourmet experience (Liquorice by Johan Bülow, n.d.)
Product development	New flavors, special editions and seasonal products such as easter liquorice (Lakrids by Johan Bülow, 2016)
	Liquorice for food (Lakrids by Johan Bülow, 2016)
	The liquorice is made in a round, often colorful shape and comes in jars with stylish labels (Lakrids by Johan Bülow, n.d.)
"Strategies"	Sold at selected retailers where design and quality is prioritized over sector (Liquorice by Johan Bülow, n.d.)
Launch	Launched during the tourist season (Liquorice by Johan Bülow, n.d.)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Online, own stores, retailers (Liquorice by Johan Bülow, n.d.)
	The retailers are known for their design and quality and contain hotels, wine shops, designer boutiques and high-end department stores (Liquorice by Johan Bülow, n.d.)
	The own shops are placed at locations where tourists are: Kastrup airport, Copenhagen Tivoli etc. at selected retailers where design and quality is prioritized over sector (Liquorice by Johan Bülow, n.d.)
Marketing/PR	#firstfixforfree: Free sample on all products before buying (Husted Sylvest, 2015, 2016)
Control activities	trademarks

Company	Lärabar
Founder's background	Lara Merriken: Degree in psychology, buyer for the nutrition department at Whole Foods Market (Merriken, 2012)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	names referring to cookies (Larabar.com, n.d.)
Concept Development	Energy bars made from very few but wholesome natural ingredients such as nuts and dates, sprung from the founders own need for a wholesome snack that's more convenient than trail mix (Larabar.com, n.d.; Merriken, 2012)
	An idea to produce indulgent food that would benefit the health (as opposed producing unhealthy indulgent food and trying to "healthify" it) (Merriken, 2012)
Product development	New sub-brands & new flavors (Larabar.com, n.d.)
	Foods suitable for special diets such as gluten-free and dairy-free diets (Larabar.com, n.d.)
"Strategies"	An idea to produce indulgent food that would benefit health (as opposed to making unhealthy induögent food and then trying to "healtify" it) (Merriken, 2012)
Launch	Launched in Colorado Whole Foods Markets (after having gotten an OK to do so when the product was ready in an early stage of the product development from a regional buyer at Whole Foods during her work shift) (Merriken, 2012)
	Made the first batch by hand (Ladieswholaunch.com, 2007)
	Did the sales in the stores in the beginning and talked to the customers (Mednik, 2011)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Orgnic supermarkets like Trader Joe's and Whole Foods Market, supermarkets, specialty shops and online (Ladieswholaunch.com, 2007)
Marketing/PR	Handed out samples and talked to customers in the store (Navratil, 2007)
	Ä is used in LÄRABAR in order to guide how it's pronounec and to make it more interesting (Ladieswholaunch.com, 2007)
	Brand Ambassadors for professionals within medical, nutrition or fitness field (Larabar.ca, n.d.)
	Blogger collaborations (Raudonis, 2010; Notey, n.d.)
Control activities	trademarks

Company	Method Products
Founder's background	childhood friends, branding, strategy, climatology (Adler, 2011)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	untraditional and colorful bottles (method, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	Home cleaning supplies with great packaging design, (for the industry) new scents, natural ingredients and a green, cruelty-free cradle-to-cradle mindset (Inc.com, n.d.; method, n.d.)
	They saw an increase in environmental concern when it came to eating habits and health but this hadn't yet reached any cleaning supplies (Adler, 2011)
Creative collaborations	Hired sought-after designer Karim Rashid to design the products (Inc.com, n.d.)
	Disney for making bottles shaped like Disney characters (Adler, 2011; Sjepstein.com, n.d.)
Product development	Cleaning supplies for dish, laundry, home cleaning, hands, body, air fresheners (method, n.d.)
"Strategies"	They aimed to disrupt the cleaning supplies industry (Inc.com, n.d.)
	Fast innovation - making advantage of being a small player in comparison to FMCG companies (Inc.com, n.d.)
	Outsourced production to 50 other manufacturers (Inc.com, n.d.)
Launch	Free samples at parties (Adler, 2011)
	Started with getting into independent stores (Adler, 2011)
	Demos in the stores (Adler, 2011)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Chains such as Target, Bed Bath & Beyond, online etc (Adler, 2011)
Marketing/PR	Started with demos in stores (Adler, 2011)

	Certificates from organization acknowledging the brand's efforts in being environmental-friendly and animal-friendly (method, n.d.)
Control activities	Trademarks including trade dress protection
	utility patents and design patents related to packaging
Control-related issues	Were accused by Clorox for using a daisy in their marketing which they have registered as their trademark. Responded by launching a marketing campaign where people could vote on who owned the daisy (mother nature being one of the alternatives) (Adler, 2011).

Company	Moleskine
Founder's background	literature & publishing
	<p>"The product and the Moleskine story really go way back, toward the end of the 1800s to the beginning of the 1900s. A group of artists and literati, mostly based in Paris, started using this notebooks, But the product then disappeared toward the second half of the 1900s, around 1980." Moleskine notebooks, in their current iteration, are made by a company formed in 1997. (Ryssdal, 2013)</p>
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	<p>They began producing its notebooks in 1997, but the company cultivated the perception that its product had been around forever. The booklet inside each Moleskine described the "history of a legendary notebook" and the story of the Paris booksellers and the famous artists. (Raphel, 2014)</p>
	<p>When Moleskine went public in Italy, It positioned itself not as a stationery brand but as a luxury-goods company. Vissa ifrågasätter dock om deras brand verkligen sträcker sig så långt....</p>
	<p>"Obviously, we don't just sell products—we don't just sell notebooks. We also sell a story." (Raphel, 2014)</p>
	<p>"Moleskine is a cultural icon. It is not a simple notebook, and it is not a commodity, but a free platform for creativity."</p>
	<p>Moleskine is a category leader because it speaks loudly with a soft voice. Its ubiquity is contrasted by the humble way its logo is blind stamped on the back of each book, saying "this book is all about you, not us.</p>
Creative collaborations	<p>corporations can team with Moleskine to create custom products for their clientele (Raphel, 2014)</p>
	<p>Moleskine has also collaborated with brands such as Lego, The Simpsons, and Star Wars to create limited-editions notebooks and diaries (Raphel, 2014)</p>

	The company has also partnered with Evernote (Raphel, 2014)
Product development	Har fått bredda antalet produkter (Raphel, 2014)
	Moleskine has begun to market itself as being at the forefront of the “analog-digital continuum.” (Raphel, 2014)
"Strategies"	"We have a strong network of partners, and each has its own network of retailers. Our business model is to cultivate a big network, while keeping the company small." (Raphel, 2014)
	Their mission is built on four pillars: imagination, travel, memory, and personal identity.(Carbone, 2011)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	The Syntegra purchase also let Moleskine expand its range. You used to have to hunt the notebooks down in indie bookstores and specialty stationery shops. Now, Moleskine has become ubiquitous. Moleskines are sold in ninety-two countries. (Raphel, 2014)
	About 15 percent of Moleskines sell online, from Amazon to the company’s own e-commerce store, in the last couple of years, online sales have been flat. (Pathak, 2015)
	The bulk of its revenue comes from its own stores — there are over 30 globally — and through resellers like Staples and Paper Source, Barnes & noble, major office-supply stores & bookstores. Moleskines sell best in urban areas with a high hipster quotient (Pathak, 2015; Raphel, 2014)
	one of Moleskine’s biggest revenue streams comes from partnerships with conferences and companies for giveaway notebooks at events. (Pathak, 2015)
Marketing/PR	doesn’t advertise traditionally or pay for product placement, but it seemingly doesn’t need to. Har fått sina fans och blivit ikoniska.... Ibland lite att man driver med de som använder Moleskine (pretentiösa) (Raphel, 2014)

	has never done classic above-the-line marketing, choosing instead to rely on earned media while spending any marketing dollars on digital. (Pathak, 2015)
	there's a lot of events — ex. Moleskine stores globally are exhibiting paper mannequins by a German artist
	absence of advertising. Instead, the company leverages word of mouth and their special editions designed for institutions such as MoMA and events like Tribeca Films and the Montreaux Jazz Festival. "We create visibility for brands in special moments close to our target and provide opportunity for people to see the brand in a special occasion." (Carbone, 2011)
	Moleskine is also very active on social media: On Instagram alone, it has almost 35,000 followers. (Pathak, 2015)
	Free advertising comes in the form of "sightings" Moleskine enjoys what I call "brand anonymity" allowing their products to become props in films and TV. Their classic black notebook blends into the background yet can't be missed. Their journals have appeared in films such as The Devil Wears Prada, The Motorcycle Diaries, and on the series, C.S.I. (Pathak, 2015)
Control activities	Trademarks
	The main focus is on strengthening the company's brand values (for example by organizing exhibitions) as Moleskine believes those are the hardest to replicate and what has made the brand successful. (Carbone, 2011)
	Patent for their notebook in collaboration with Evernote
Control-related issues	"There are a lot of counterfeited/similar notebooks (Instructables.com, 2010; Miscellany One, 2013)"

Company	Monster Energy
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	Green and black color combination, black cans, double size
Irrelevant attribute	Monster Assault & The Doctor (Monsterenergy.com, n.d.)
Concept Development	"I viewed Red Bull as being a white-collar, yuppie drink," Hall said. "I wanted to be an aggressive, blue-collar drink-[like] the guy with the tattoos." (Khermouch, 2007)
	Relatively consequent with black and green
Creative collaborations	Monster Energy chose to sponsor the most marketable athlete in mountain bike racing, Sam Hill. Love him or hate him Sam Hill has a great deal of influence on the sport, you just need to see all the people at the races and local trails who emulate the young Australian to see what I mean. Monster knew what they were doing and they didn't stop there. Sponsoring Sam Hill's teammate Brendan Fairclough, another influential and 'cool' rider, Monster then set their eyes on Steve Peat, then Josh Bryceland and the list goes on. Monster's roster of athletes grows every year, but it's their careful placement of product rather than all out coverage that makes them different. There is no point aligning yourself with athletes that don't represent your brand how you want it. It does have to be said that there is something vaguely similar with all of Monster's athletes, they all seem to be part of the 'in' gang, the riders 'kids' emulate and whose style is often copied. (Factory Jackson, 2011)
	mostly recognized for supporting BMX, Supercross, and Motocross events (Zoeller, 2016)
	music bands.. (Attard, 2011)
Product development	Black can with green logotype standing out from the crowd
	"I think readers will agree that as far as innovation and the energy drink category we're the most innovative and we'll continue to be the most innovative in the country."
"Strategies"	Focused on becoming a leader in the double-sized energy drinks segment

Launch	giant booth near the entrance of the 2002 National Assn. of Convenience Stores trade show in Las Vegas. Years later, show-goers still recall the shock of seeing an attitude brand like Monster from the staid Hansen's Natural.
	rather than go in for expensive media buys and corporate sponsorships of major events, Hall decided to focus strictly on the athletes. Together with sports marketing veteran Scott Sepkovic, he went prospecting, his pockets lined and ready. "We went to the X Games with \$25,000 in our pockets and signed people on the spot. We knew that if you show them the money they'd believe you." The pair made it a point to approach athletes who had qualified for the finals, ensuring that their investments would produce an immediate payoff in TV coverage. (Khermouch, 2007)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	They hired someone that the main responsible didn't agree with but who established a direct store delivery network, where the manufacturer distribute directly to the stores (instead of the stores' storage) (Khermouch, 2007)
Marketing/PR	Extreme sport events
	"Monster Girls" promoting the sports events
	Everything that we're involved in is very lifestyle oriented; we are obviously a very active company. Everything that we do and the way our presence is felt is lifestyle orientated," (Attard, 2011)
	The Monster icon is famous in the extreme sports scene, being emblazoned on everything from snowboards to motorbikes to skateboarding legend Rob Dyrdek's back!

	<p>The company is actively involved with its freestyle motocross team, performing on average 200 times a year, thrilling audiences everywhere. It's a marketing strategy that has worked extremely well, connecting the brand with consumers on a whole new level. "It's a very grassroots company; right from the beginning with our company we set out not to do any above line media, everything was pretty much back to a grassroots perspective from sampling to sponsoring a lot of events, athletes and getting our message out that way, (Attard, 2011)</p>
	<p>The biggest thing is we are happy to support upcoming bands that are alternatively a little bit different. We continually support and help out and I think people see it from a money perspective to get these bands on the road," says Mr Hunter. As well as funding new talent, Monster supports successful bands like Amity Affliction, Bullet For My Valentine and Deez Nuts to name a few. (Attard, 2011)</p>
	<p>Monster Energy puts a strong focus on sponsoring music festivals and concerts (Attard, 2011)</p>
Control activities	trademarks
	Several design patents for the packaging and also a utility patent for a liquid dispenser
Control-related issues	Chinese online stores are sued for selling counterfeit energy drinks (Godoy, 2015)

Company	MUJI
Founder's background	Originally a brand developed for Seiyu discount department store. (useful + agreeable, 2009)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	<p>Antithesis to the habits of consumer society in 1980's Japan. Either foreign luxury (increasing in popularity) or poor-quality, low-priced goods, fueling consumption. MUJI wanted to get products to return to simply being useful and not let them mean more to the people buying them than that.</p> <p>They aim to sell "no brand quality goods" which are as plain as possible, meaning that there could be more beauty in simplicity than in luxury (Muji.eu, n.d.; Aaker, 2010)</p>
	Keeping prices not too high by making production streamlined, minimal packaging, sufficient materials serving their purpose. (Muji.eu, n.d)
Creative collaborations	In accordance with their belief that products shouldn't have logos and that people shouldn't be overaffectionate of their items, there are MUJI-products that are made of famous designers but these are not disclosed. (useful + agreeable, 2009)
	BUT there ARE also many creative collaborations - Lego, asian artists, Tokyo Metropolitan Government, THONET (manufacturer of German furniture classics) etc. (Bobb, 2015; Archer, 2009; Eunheejo.com, n.d.; Muji.de, n.d.)
	MUJI also expands to other sectors through collaborations, for example to architecture by collaborating with Japan's housing agency to rearrange Danchi apartments (making them open-plan) and to the car industry by collaborating with Nissan (Knight, 2015; Just-auto.com, 2001)

Product development	MUJI also has three campgrounds in Japan (Aaker, 2010)
	Restaurant in connection to its store (Low, 2015)
"Strategies"	Shopping at Muji and using Muji products make a forceful statement about who you are. You are above looking for badge brands. You are, rather, a rational person interested in the right values, and you choose to connect with a firm that is interested in promoting social good and satisfaction from life. (Aaker, 2010)
Launch	Originally a brand developed for Seiyu discount department store. (useful + agreeable, 2009)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Stores in shopping centers, online sales and historically catalogues (useful + agreeable, 2009; Low, 2015)
Marketing/PR	Very little marketing. The catalogue has been the "only" marketing. (useful + agreeable, 2009)
Control activities	trademarks
	utility patents
	there's has even been a counterfeit outlet store chain in China, which - although counterfeiting the original Muji - owns the trademark in China and therefore prevents the original Muji from entering the Chinese market (Sanchanta, 2005)

Company	Pure Fix Cycles
Founder's background	Childhood friends, computer skills, family with experience in import-export, entrepreneurship course (Burke, n.d.)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	Based on their own need: They wanted a good-looking but cheaper bike. Removed the expensive gears. (Daley, 2013)
	"Cycling at its purest" means simplicity and efficiency for Pure Fix and that goes for both the products and business model: meaning that all unnecessary aspects are cut out, such as middle-men between production and buyer, online-based product development and production and no extra features on the bikes. (Pure Fix Cycles, n.d.)
	Seeing that the bike does good both for environment and health, they emphasize this by donating to charity (Pure Fix Cycles, n.d.)
	"Cycling at its purest", summing up simplicity and efficiency (Pure Fix Cycles, n.d.)
Creative collaborations	Water Charity organization (Pure Fix Cycles, n.d.)
Product development	Simple design in many different color variations and models (Pure Fix Cycles, n.d.)
	"Because we're smaller, we're able to innovate faster. We can switch our manufacturing process and come out with something new almost immediately," (Daley, 2013)
"Strategies"	Grew organically: Started small, doubled each order (Daley, 2013)
	Hired their president (Daley, 2013)
	Bike-stores are allowed to buy small batches - with the mindset that any business is good business (Daley, 2013)
Launch	Grew organically: Started small and expected to sell over a long time, but the bikes sold out quickly (Daley, 2013)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Online (Daley, 2013)

	<p>Usually with bicycles there's a distribution chain, with large companies purchasing from manufacturers and selling to distributors," Schau explains. "By acting as our own distributor and supplier, we're able to have an affordable product right off the bat." (Daley, 2013)</p>
	<p>unlike larger bike companies, Pure Fix has no minimum order, which allows smaller shops to take a chance on them. "We'll do anything to keep business, and that's gone a long way for us." (Daley, 2013)</p>
	<p>USA and abroad (Hall, 2014)</p>
Control activities	<p>trademarks</p>

Company	Renee Voltaire
Founder's background	Already a "name". Restaurant and bakery "chain" owner, chef sommelier, cook book writer, restaurant/yoga house owner etc. (André, 2014; Holmlund, 2013)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	"brown rice in high heels" (Rosell, 2010)
	Took inspiration from her own trips to a raw food health center in Arizona (André, 2014)
Creative collaborations	Renée Voltaire is the "spokesperson" of the brand. (Reneevoltaire.se, n.d.)
Product development	The products are expensive since they're made with highest quality ingredients and time taking procedures. (Holmlund, 2013)
"Strategies"	She wanted to reach the food channels but when they didn't want to sell her products, she contacted the store owners directly and started selling to the stores that way. (Holmlund, 2013)
	Learned along the way and re-invested the money into new batches (Holmlund, 2013)
Launch	"Renée was serving juices for an event at NK and was requested by an NK manager to offer products for them to sell. Had 2 weeks to deliver and manufactured the products in her own kitchen. (André, 2014; Holmlund, 2013)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	supermarkets, pharmacies, own store, health stores, sports stores etc. (Reneevoltaire.se, n.d.)
Marketing/PR	No advertising in the classic channels. (Reneevoltaire.se, n.d.)
Control activities	trademarks

Company	SoulCycle
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	The names of the classes: Soul Warrior etc. (Soul-cycle.com, n.d.)
Concept Development	The idea sprung from their own wish to find a workout that wasn't just effective but also truly fun and enjoyable. They had started to think about this independently and then had a lunch to discuss it. From that, they rented a studio and opened four and a half months later. (Patch.com, 2013)
	SoulCycle is supposed to feel like a community for its members (Pathak, 2015; Cummings, 2015)
Creative collaborations	Has teamed up with Target for a pop-up studio free classes (A Bullseye View, 2016; (Soul-cycle.com,
Product development	They try to listen as much as possible to their customers when they develop their concept (Patch.com, 2013; Cummings, 2015)
	The instructors become celebrities within the SoulCycle community and through Social Media and website you can find more information about them and their take on fitness, e.g. meal plans and playlists (Cummings, 2015; Pathak, 2015)
	Front row has become a status symbol and the people there are expected to perform very well. It has become something to strive for, and requires you to take classes in order to master the moves. Sometimes the instructors appoint these front row cyclists, asking them to take a row further back. (Lepore, 2015; Rubin, 2015)
"Strategies"	They' started by opening one studios, then more studios and were also bought by gym chain Equinox
Launch	They started with one studio in New York. (Soul-cycle.com, n.d.)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Own gym & Equinox chain (Soul-cycle.com, n.d.)

	they want to create experiences, since that's what SoulCycle is all about. For example, when opening a new studio, they invited both influencers and local people in order to spread the word and get people to experience the classes. (Patch.com, 2013)
Marketing/PR	
	They've also used merch such as T-shirts as a way to get their members to be "walking billboards".
	Members are promoted online in so-called Soul Stories to tell about their transformed lives from SoulCycle
	They are a lifestyle brand so their affectionate members are basically doing the marketing (Cummings, 2015)
	SoulCycle also gets PR from the celebrities that go to the classes
Control activities	trademarks
Control-related issues	there are many similar studios (Battan, 2014; Held, 2013)

Company	the art of shaving
Founder's background	arometherapy, holistic medicine, spa industry, financial consultant for a men's cosmetics/perfume distributor (Pennington, 2005; Sephora, n.d.)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	Shaving turned into a ritual instead of a habit (Lindsay, 2006)
	The four steps of shaving (Lindsay, 2006; The Art of Shaving, n.d.)
	There's a nostalgic feel to the entire concept (Lindsay, 2006)
	Sprung from their own need for a non-irritating shaving experience (Newman, 2010)
Creative collaborations	The Satorialist (street fashion photographer) had a gallery show, showcasing men in Chelsea and their way of grooming, to launch The Art Of Shaving's The Chelsea Collection (Levin, 2013)
Product development	After having cooked up a shaving oil, they started a store offering shaves (Pennington, 2005; Sephora, n.d.)
	After having opened two shops they begun selling their products (Sephora, n.d.)
	Compatibility with regular razor blades from Gillette (Esquire, 2007)
"Strategies"	Just as in cosmetics stores, the staff can educate the customers on how to solve their shaving problems. (Lindsay, 2006)
Launch	An article about them, published in The New York Times led to an increased amount of customers to their store (Sephora, n.d.)
	The products were launched when their reputation was already well-established (Sephora, n.d.)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Sold in their own stores, at retailers like Neiman Marcus, and online https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/77746 (Pennington, 2005; Theartofshaving.com, n.d.)
Marketing/PR	An article about them, published in The New York Times led to an increased amount of customers to their store (Sephora, n.d.)

	They published a book on the subject of shaving (Sephora, n.d.)
	4 steps of shaving method (Grill, 2014; Lindsay, 2006; The Art of Shaving, n.d.)
	Starter kits to get new customers to try out the products (Grill, 2014)
	The brotherhood of shaving - the brand's newsletter with member offers, expert advice etc (Theartofshaving.com, n.d.; Grill, 2014)
Control activities	trademarks
Control-related issues	There are counterfeit products (Amazon.com, 2012, 2016)

Company	The Laundress
Founder's background	Gwen Whiting and Lindsey Boyd: Educational background in Design, Fiber Science, Textile & Apparel Management, careers in the high-end fashion industry. Own T-shirt brand. (The Laundress, n.d.)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	Luxury eco-friendly detergent with special formula for each delicate fabric, decreasing the dry-cleaning bills in a time where people's economy was pressured. (SmartCEO, 2014; The Laundress, n.d.)
	Grew from their own annoyance with dry cleaning-bills and clothes that too quickly begun to look worn-out (Le Mystère, 2014)
Creative collaborations	Le Labo for scenting the detergents (Breslin, 2012; The Laundress, n.d.)
	J.Crew - soap for collars and shirt cuffs, cashmere detergent with J.Crew's name and a sweater comb (Breslin, 2012; J.Crew, n.d.; The Laundress Blog, 2015)
Product development	A range of 65 products, each detergent is specialized for a certain task or fabric (Mau, 2015; The Laundress, n.d.)
	Extended product range to also include storage products, tools, kits, candles etc. (The Laundress, n.d.)
"Strategies"	Physical store for increasing awareness, (Mau, 2015)
	Close relationship with their customers who can post questions about cleaning (SmartCEO, 2014)
Launch	did a trade show and got featured in New York Times (Mau, 2015)
	used their network from the fashion industry, started with clients like Bergdorf Goodman (Mau, 2015)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Own store, online and high end-stores and warehouses like Bergdorf Goodman and Gracious Home (Mau, 2015)
Marketing/PR	The flagship store is a strong brand-builder, offering expert advice on laundry (Wolff, 2015)
Control activities	trademarks
Control-related issues	There seem to be counterfeit products (Amazon.com, 2014)

Company	TOMS
Founder's background	entrepreneur, reality show participant (Chu, 2013; Montague, 2013)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	One for one business model: Buy a pair of shoes and one pair will be given for free to a child in need (Toms.com, n.d.)
Creative collaborations	Tyler Ramsey (artist) lived in a glass box outside Toms store and painted shoes on demand while everything was livestreamed on Google Hangouts. (Schwartz, 2013)
Product development	The shoes' design is a traditional shoe in Argentina (Chu, 2013)
	Expanding the BM to other products than shoes, for example eyewear, backpacks etc (Montague, 2013; Toms.com, n.d.)
	Limited editions (Chu, 2013)
"Strategies"	Expanding the BM to other products than shoes, for example eyewear (Chu, 2013; Montague, 2013)
Launch	Set up a shop. With the unusual but wearable design and the great story behind it, it got popular among people in the fashion and entertainment business (Chu, 2013)
	Articles in fashion magazines followed (Chu, 2013)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	retailers - the biggest being Nordstroms, online (Chu, 2013)

Marketing/PR	Word of mouth (Montague, 2013)
	The founder published a book, establishing himself as the spokesperson for the one for one BM
	The story about how the idea of Toms was created (the founder traveled in Argentina and was upset on how many children didn't have shoes and how that would also limit their ability to get education as they weren't allowed into the schools barefoot) (Chu, 2013; Montague, 2013)
	Brand ambassadors like Charlize Theron and Ben Afflek
	Influencers that originally have embraced the brand themselves (and now have become influencers that are given products) (Chu, 2013)
Control activities	trademarks including trade dress protection (for eye glass frames)
Control-related issues	Skechers made a copy of the shoes associated with TOMs and copied their one for one business model, calling their concept BOBs, and selling the shoes for a slightly lower price. (Poisuo, 2012; wikiHow, n.d.)

Company	Urban Ears
Founder's background	Design-related career for 30 years. Konrad Bergström has previously launched about 30 brands on the Swedish market such as snowboarding brands Burton and Quiksilver. (Alestig, 2013)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	few - if any ornaments single-colored headphones (Urbanears official website, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	In 2005, headphones still only solved a functional need. at that time, colorful headphones was an unusual idea and Konrad understood it would be the next big thing. Consumption of music was increasing and there was a need for designed headphones enhancing ones identity. (Nilsson, 2014)
Product development	The model Plattan, which is the best sold model, has probably been updated 40 times since its original launch. Initially they sold some batches that they aren't very proud of today. (Bosson, 2013)
	Although they had many ideas and projects they wanted to carry out, it was important to start with the cash cow among the products (Bosson, 2013)
"Strategies"	"why would we only sell in Sweden?" If a product is conceptualized and packaged in the right way from start, you might as well start globally.(Nilsson, 2014)
Launch	It was important to start the production before any competitor. Instead of working forewer on perfecting the technology and sound quality they focused on design.(Nilsson, 2014)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Manufacturing is located in Shenzen in China where they have 18 employees. The products are distributed to the retailers from the factory. (Nilsson, 2014)
	online (Nilsson, 2014)
	consumer electronics retail chains (Nilsson, 2014)

	sports gear retailers (Nilsson, 2014)
Control activities	trademarks and utility patents
	In order not to lose customers to competitors, Urban Ears has created another brand, which is similar to Urban Ears but cheaper. (Bosson, 2013; Nilsson, 2014)
	Initially the copies made Urban Ears a bit proud. Now, in order to win over their competitors they focus on marketing and product development: quality, sound and usability. (Bosson, 2013)
Control-related issues	Although the headphones are copyright protected, the protection wasn't strong enough to prevent a competitor's similar design (Löfgren, 2013).

Company	Voss
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	cylindrical bottle (Vosswater.com, n.d.)
Irrelevant attribute	Artesian water from Norway (Vosswater.com, n.d.)
Concept Development	Whenever Ole came to visit Christopher in San Francisco or Christopher returned to Norway, the first thing Christopher requested was Norwegian water. It was then that they knew they wanted to share Norway fresh water with the rest of the world "VOSS" (Voss World, 2012)
	They set out in 1998 to create a revolutionary bottled water brand that would stand out in the large but homogenous and competitive landscape of the global bottled water market. In particular, the ultra-premium segment offered opportunities for a chic and sophisticated brand to distinguish itself and appeal to a broad range of consumers worldwide at an elevated price point, creating an attractive proposition for customers in multiple channels and geographies. (Voss World, 2012)
	NORWEGIAN artesian water. Similar to FIJI water in the aspect of referring to a place that seems "untouched". Norway is home to some of the purest spring and artesian water on the earth. Ole Christian Sandberg and Christopher Harlem, wanted to provide the world with "the highest quality water, to the highest accounts, in the highest-quality package." (Voss World, 2012)
	But the target audience for these brands will continue to be people who can afford to pay a premium price for premium water. (Voss World, 2012)
Creative collaborations	To design the bottle, they turned to Neil Kraft, a former creative director for Calvin Klein. Kraft and his team took their inspiration from fragrance-industry designers who use personality and packaging to define a brand.
Product development	"highest-quality package." "a new way to think about water. Beyond refreshing...to beautiful." (Voss World, 2012)

"Strategies"	the third part [first: norwegian water (?), second: the bottle (?)] of its brand strategy: limiting distribution of VOSS exclusively to upscale establishments such as fine restaurants, hotels, clubs, and spas, first in Europe and eventually in the US. (Voss World, 2012)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Over the next several years, the Company developed a leading on-premise channel platform [on-premise = direct consumption, such as a hotel restaurant instead of a grocery store....] in the U.S. and in many other countries, and established its ultra-premium brand equity by partnering with some of the most prestigious hotel and restaurant accounts in the world. (Voss World, 2012)
	while the distribution strategy for most super-premium waters is still through hotels, clubs, and the like, VOSS and several of the other brands have taken a new tact. Now they are selectively distributing their products via upscale retail channels to make them more widely available. (Voss World, 2012)
Marketing/PR	VOSS quickly became a significant player in the market, helped along by its trendy bottle being seen in the hands of worldwide celebrities. (Apparently, Madonna took a liking to it.) (Voss World, 2012)
Control activities	trademarks including trade dress protection
Control-related issues	They've sued a Liquor company, with VOSS claiming their rights to their bottle, which was trade mark protected (Jhrlegal.com, 2013)
	VOSS has now lost their registered 3D mark for their bottle after another liquor company questioning its distinctive character (after it had been sued). The companies reached a settlement. (Novagraaf.com, 2013; Slind-Flor, 2015)

Company	WelleCo
Founder's background	co-founder Elle Macpherson: Supermodel, lingerie brand owner (Welleco.com, n.d.)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	The super elixir (Welleco.com, n.d.)
Concept Development	Alkalizing health supplements packaged in beautiful caddies, sold as beauty products in luxury stores (and online stores) (NET-A-PORTER, n.d.; Welleco.com, n.d.)
Creative collaborations	Elle Macpherson - known for her great figure - is the spokesperson for and co-founder of the brand (Welleco.com, n.d.)
Product development	The supplements are sold in expensive but beautiful ceramic caddies, making them feel luxurious (Welleco.com, n.d.)
	Other wellness products (Welleco.com, n.d.)
	New flavors (Welleco.com, n.d.)
"Strategies"	The supplements, claimed to improve skin, aren't sold as supplements but instead as beauty products, sold in the beauty departments of high-end fashion stores and online. (Earle-Levine, 2014; Sinks, 2015; NET-A-PORTER, n.d.; Young, 2014)
	The brand's products are a part of trendy but disputed (and celebrity-supported) alkaline diet (Ambrose, 2015)
Launch	Launched at Selfridges, with a Q&A with Elle Macpherson livestreamed on youtube and Google Hangouts (The Beauty Shortlist, 2014)
Sales channels / Distribution channels	Sold online, in the brand's store and in high-end department stores, Wholefoods (Welleco.com, n.d.)
	Sold in the beauty department (Earle-Levine, 2014; Sinks, 2015; NET-A-PORTER, n.d.; Young, 2014)
Marketing/PR	Because of the co-founder Elle Macpherson's celebrity status, the brand gets a lot of coverage in media. (Allen, n.d.)
	Many stars are praising the product as well (Allen, n.d.)
Control-activities	trademarks

Company	Zumba
Founder's background	Fitness instructor, entrepreneurs (Zumba.tlw.hu, n.d.)
Design attributes other than logotypes and labels	-
Irrelevant attribute	-
Concept Development	Franchise business for fitness classes with a dance party vibe (Giang, 2012)
	As Zumba is supposed to have a low threshold for starting working out it has a very broad fan base (Buchanan, 2012)
Creative collaborations	Artists like Wyclef Jean and Pitbull collaborate with Zumba for including their music in the Zumba fitness routines (Buchanan, 2012; Giang, 2012)
	Nintendo Wii for developing a Zumba game (Nintendo.com, 2010)
Product development	Training DVD:s have developed into a franchise for instructors to offer classes at gyms and studios (BizeeBee, 2012; Giang, 2012)
	Merchandize apparel has become a big part of the business (Giang, 2012)
	Events such as fitness concerts (Nintendo.com, 2010; Zumba.com, n.d.)
"Strategies"	Initially a workout DVD, Zumba noticed a demand for real-life classes and started a franchise for training instructors, establishing Zumba as a lifestyle brand with merchandize clothing and music, which all have become large businesses in themselves (BizeeBee, 2012; Buchanan, 2012; Giang, 2012)
Launch	Zumba was launched as a workout DVD which was sold through late-night infomercials on TV. (Giang, 2012)
	People called in, not to get the DVD but to ask for where to find a class and how to become an instructor, which led to Zumba Academy where people are trained to become certified Zumba instructors (Giang, 2012)
	The classes were introduced at individual studios and gyms since the chains weren't interested at first (Giang, 2012)

Sales channels / Distribution channels	Individual studios and gyms, large gym chains, online, apps (Buchanan, 2012; Giang, 2012; Zumba.com, n.d.)
Marketing/PR	Initially marketed in a TV infomercial (Giang, 2012)
	The franchisees market themselves but are only allowed to use the Zumba trademarks if paying a monthly fee (BizeeBee, 2012; Zumba.com, n.d.)
Control activities	trademarks and service marks
	Zumba has a large in-house legal department. (Buchanan, 2012)
	They've tried to benefit from the large amount of counterfeited training DVD:s by adding messages on packaging and during the video about going to a real-life class. (Buchanan, 2012)
	Design patents for Zumba activewear
Control-related issues	A lot of infringement and violations, especially license agreement violations and unauthorized instructors (Buchanan, 2012)