

## Relationship of Brand Identity and Image

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The article is organized in eight parts. The first part presents an introduction of the research problem, the aim and the objectives formulated. The aim of the article is to conduct empirical studies after theoretical analysis of the relationship between brand identity and brand image. The objectives of the article are: 1) to determine and prove the concept of brand image theoretically; 2) to study and summarize the sources of brand identity; 3) to analyze the elements of brand identity; 4) to carry out theoretical analysis of the relationship between brand identity and brand image; 5) to prepare the investigation model for brand identity and image relationship; 6) to conduct empiric studies of brand identity and image relationship. The tools of classical marketing do not help answering the question, why some brands are so unique. Just several brands obtain a feature emphasizing brand identity and uniqueness. Graphical references do not provide any answers because they are developed on the basis of external brand image. However, it has already been conceived that brand is reflected not by its external graphical view but by the attitude towards the elements of brand identity. Thus, the article attempts at solving the problem of the relationship between brand identity and brand image.

The second part of this article describes the conception of brand identity. It also examines the attitude of various authors to the conception of brand identity.

The third chapter of this article provides the analysis of the sources of brand identity. The main six elements that constitute the sources of brand identity are indicated in this part as well.

The prism of brand identity is described and the element of identity prism is analyzed in the fourth part of this article.

The process of brand image building is described in the fifth part of the article. The chapter provides the issue of the relationship of brand identity and its image as well as the analysis of relationship of brand identity and its image.

The sixth part of this article indicates and describes the theoretical model the relationship of brand identity and its image. This model is based on the idea that brand identity is managed. Positive brand image that ensures a competitive advantage is build up when conveying brand identity to consumers efficiently and employing particular strategies of positioning.

The seventh part of this article presents the results of empirical research and the analysis of the relationship of brand identity and its image.

The last chapter of the article formulates the final

conclusions on the relationship of brand identity and its image.

Keywords: brand identity, brand image, brand positioning.

### Introduction

**The urgency.** Globalization, new technologies, intense competition, consumer demand shifts and economic and political system changes challenge enterprises in new ways. Companies, striving to achieve better results in the market, in comparison with their competitors need to acquire and retain particular uniqueness that can not be imitated and would provide a competitive advantage. Available brands of the enterprise are one of resources that can hardly be imitated.

A brand itself does not ensure any competitive advantage of the enterprise in the market. Good results are achieved just by those companies which are capable of managing their brand, reflecting its identity, and determining its elements, uniqueness and equity. The development of brand image while attempting to present brand identity to consumers, enhances the position of a company under the conditions of intense competition.

**The problem.** Research and empirical studies have been carried out by such scholars as J.L. Kapferer (1997; 2003), L. de Chernatony (1999, 2001), D. Aaker and E. Joachimsthaler (1997, 2003), L. Keller (1993, 1998), F. Melin (1997), L. Upshaw (1995) and other; however, this sphere still lacks solidity and concrete approach, attempting to highlight the link of brand identity elements and brand image.

Trying to get the attention of a consumer while choosing a good of a company from many other provided in the market, companies should single out the good among other competitive goods by performing theoretical and empirical studies on brand identity, highlighting the principal elements of brand identity and their relationship to brand image. Thus, the article attempts at solving the problem of the relationship between brand identity and brand image.

**The object of the article** centers of the elements of brand image and their relationship with brand image.

**The aim of the article** is to conduct empirical studies after theoretical analysis of the relationship between brand identity and brand image.

### The objectives are:

1. To determine and prove the concept of brand image theoretically.
2. To study and summarize the sources of brand identity.

3. To analyze the elements of brand identity.
4. To carry out theoretical analysis of the relationship between brand identity and brand image.
5. To prepare the investigation model for brand identity and image relationship.
6. To conduct empiric studies of brand identity and image relationship.

**Research methodology** includes systemic and comparative literary analysis, secondary data analysis, qualitative and quantitative studies. The qualitative studies are based on a focus group method while the quantitative studies employ a method of a questionnaire survey.

### Conception of brand identity

Intense competition requires certain actions to be taken in brand management and includes the establishment of brand identity, defining its attributes, uniqueness and equity.

The concepts such as brand vision, aim and identity are the new ones. The conception of brand identity was mentioned for the first time in Europe by Kapferer, 1986. The importance of the conception and its understanding quickly disseminated in the entire world. The literature on brand management, which has been widely examined, uses the terms “equity” (Aaker, 1996), while the concept of the identity is actually not used.

The conception of brand identity includes everything what makes the brand meaningful and unique. Brand includes characteristics of a good as well as a set of other elements, entailing brand identity. This is a new conception; however, when the differences of a certain category of goods start to decrease, the concept becomes the major subject of investigations (Melin, 1997). Identity includes moral image, aim and values that together constitute the essence of individuality while differentiating the brand (de Chernatony, 2002). The identity of the strongest brands covers emotional benefit, which provides the strength to the brand. However, rendering the equity to the consumer the good has to provide a functional benefit as well. The additional value is rendered if the good provides the benefit of self-expression that, in turn, reflects the image of the consumer (Aaker, 1996). The researcher D. Grundey (2002) states that brand identity is the most important stage of the identification of a good from the quality on which the further existence of the good depends. The main principled provision of brand identity is a way, which becomes a possibility to reach the consumer. Brand has to “communicate” with consumers because this is the condition for remaining in the market.

D. Aaker (2003) notes that brand identity is a set of brand associations which need to be developed and retained for a brand strategy. Identity should help in the development of the relationship between a brand and a consumer, providing a particular benefit. The main principles of brand identity are: 1) communication becomes not only an important supply of information but a daily struggle to remain heard and visible, which constitutes the prerequisite of durability; 2) brand should adequately react to changes which makes up the prerequisite of understanding; 3) brand should reflect consumer’s benefit and expectations, remaining harmonious, which is re-

garded as the prerequisite of consistency (Grundey, 2002).

Analyzing the concept of identity, the problem of consistency and continuity arises as well. The conception of brand identity deals with the influence of time on the uniqueness and consistency of brand. Psychologists examine identity crisis, apparent in adolescence because the structure of identity is weak and during this period teenagers tend to change their communication model. Constant changes structure the problem, indicated by a question “Who I am really?”

Ultimately, examining social groups or minorities “cultural identity” is frequently mentioned. Searching for identity one searches for the core, made up by inseparable differences and specific cultural integrity.

Brand identity is a new concept; however, the majority of researchers have already analyzed the identity of enterprises (Schwebig, 1988; Moingoen, 2003). The identity of the enterprise is constituted by a feeling that helps the company to understand that it really exists and its existence is unique, with its history and place, distinguishing the company from others (Kapferer, 2003).

These different definitions of identity emphasize the idea that identity signifies the understanding of being oneself, seeking one’s aim, being distinguished from others and being able to resist and withstand time alterations.

According to J. Kapferer, brand identity could be defined by answering the following questions:

- What is the aim and individual vision of a brand?
- What makes a brand distinguished?
- How satisfaction could be achieved?
- What is brand’s equity?
- What are brand competence, validity and legitimacy?
- What are the features of its recognition?

This conception has appeared in brand management and is well known while positioning brands and building their image. According to de Chernatony (2001), the conception of brand identity offers a possibility to position a brand better and encourages strategic approach while managing it. A well managed system of identity provides a competitive advantage when seeking to protect oneself from competitors. Currently the society is closely connected with communication. Everybody wishes for communication or is included into the communication process unwillingly. It is extremely difficult to remain thriving and establish one’s identity under the circumstance of severe competition. Communication ensures two things: sending of a message and the guarantee that it has been received. Communication implies not only the means of technique but inventiveness as well. It represents the necessity to conceive brand identity.

Summing up it could be claimed that the conception of brand identity includes the uniqueness, meaning, aim, values, and personality and provides a possibility to position the brand better, and, thus, achieve the competitive advantage.

### Sources of brand identity

Defining brand identity and the limits of its strength and weakness it is necessary to be aware of identity

sources. With the lapse of time every brand can lose its independence and meaning, as well as lose a certain level of freedom as with the increase of brand reliability, its elements acquire a particular form and define the possible territory.

The revelation of identity starts from typical goods or services, confirming brand, symbol, logo, country of origin, advertising and package.

J. Kapferer (2003) singles out the following sources of identity:

*Good* is the primary source of identity. Brand reveals its plan and the uniqueness of its goods and services. A genuine brand never remains just as a printed record on a good. Brand transfers its equities into the process of production and distribution, which constitutes the essence of service sales as well. Brand values need to be embodied in a brand symbol. The representatives of cognitive psychology state (Kleiber, 1990; Lakof, 1987) that it is easier to define certain categories indicating their typical features instead of exactly naming the attributes of a good that require judicious parts of those categories.

Every brand forces to think spontaneously about particular goods more in comparison with another, as well as about particular actions as a means of communication. Prototype goods contain various elements of brand identity. Some prototype goods are able to rendering brand identity, regardless of the fact that brands, in essence, develop identity;

Values of brand identity transfer the essence of brand only then if they exist within the essence of brand. Tangible and intangible realities go one after another as values manage certainty and certainty manages these values.

For example, the identity of *Benetton* brand is constituted by tolerance and friendship. Colours mean much more than the subject of advertising. Colours not only determine appearance but make up an external brand with its ideology, value set and brand culture. Colours do not play the role only to distinguish the producer. Fraternity and cultural tolerance are the values of the brand;

*Name* is another source of brand identity as it is one of the most powerful sources. Investigating brand name, the features if its advantage such as the limit of justice and “know-how” as well as the sphere of competence are revealed. The majority of brand names seek to reflect features that can not be reflected or these attributes that are singled out.

Other brands exist ignoring their brand names; which is connected with the autonomy of brands. The experience indicates that brands become autonomous (independent) when they render specific meaning different from the ones in dictionaries to words. *Mercedes* was a Christian Spanish name that became a symbol of Germany. Such ability is not just the attribute of a brand, but this is a properly chosen noun. A strong brand is capable of giving a new meaning to words, changing the meaning in dictionaries.

Name as well as identity must be managed. Some names have a double meaning. The aim of communication is to select one and reject another. *Shell* chose the meaning of a sea shell (which is indicated in their logo) different from another meaning (“bomb –shell”).

*Personage* is another source. If brand is the capital of

enterprises, so the emblem is the righteousness of brand capital. The emblem symbolizes brand identity through visual image. J. Kapferer (2003) singles out the following functions of emblem:

1. It helps to identity and recognizes a brand. Emblems are extremely useful when being designed for children since various pleasant Figures were used above the text, or for example a widely used whiskey emblem.
2. It provides a guarantee. Brand could be regarded as a contract between its owner and consumer (Lambin, 2000). Brand emblem seems to be a signature, indicating a long-term commitment of a producer to retain a specific and steady level of quality.
3. It provides brand with durability when the emblem is a long-term sign.
4. It helps to identify and adjust goods to personal needs. The emblem transfers its personality to the brand and increases its equity in such a way as well as facilitates the process of identification.

The researcher D. Grundey (2002) states that a brand personage defines the person and culture of a brand in the best way. The prototype of a personage that is frequently chosen is a man or an animal, having a particular style and features.

The emblems of animals are often used to reveal the final function as animals symbolize the personality of a brand. Animals reflect the equity of a brand and any cultural characteristics as they are representatives of geographic symbols for example, a partridge is a symbol of Scotland, and a turkey – USA.

Some of the personages serve while developing a particular relationship and an emotional link between a brand and a consumer, while others become brand ambassadors (for example, *Isabella Rosselline embodied a style of French beauty which is promised by “Lancome” to all women*).

Other personages deliver a lot about brand identity. They are chosen as brand portraits and as brand features from the etymological perspectives. Such personages do not build brands but emphasize the way which is used to reveal personal features and characteristics of brands.

*Visual symbols and logotypes* become the third source of brand identity. Visual symbols and logotypes help to conceive the culture and personality of a brand and are frequently chosen seeking to apply graphic identity with the elements and values of a brand. However, it is extremely important to note that such symbols and logotypes help not only to identity brands but brands are identified together with them.

Identity has originated from earlier actions of a brand. A good, distribution communication and location include those actions. Some brands are closely related with the country of origin (for example, *the identity of “Swissair” is closely connected with Switzerland*), other are international (for example, *Ford, Opel, Mars*), and others conceal their national identity (for example, *“Canon” has never mentioned Japan, “Technics” has adopted the identity of Anglo-Saxons, though it is a company form Japan*).

Some of brands structure their identity and uniqueness based on their geographic roots, embodying advantages presented. While mentioning Finland it can be noted that this is a country where the earth ends as it is a cold, ascetic, remote, with little sun land. These features are pretty well embodied in *Finland vodka*. The vision of pure and clean water as well as of the vodka is spontaneously revealed.

*Brand developer* is one more source of identity as it is closely connected with the identity of a producer. Many of Richard Branson features are reflected in the identity of *Virgin* brand.

*Communication together with its content and form* also reveal identity. Brand usually has a gift of speech and it exists only then when it communicates. Since the moment brands start “talking” they have constantly to inform about their good and services. Communication reveals much more than it is being thought. Any way of communication discloses the information about a sender, source, the recipient-addressee and relationships that are attempted to be created in between.

In modern times audio and visual technologies of public information deliver much about brand style, the recipient and the benefit provided. All brands have their history, culture, personality, reflection and reveal that through communication.

Summing up the sources of brand identity it can be noted that all six elements: good, name, symbol, logotype, communication, personage and producer determine brand identity, the limits of its weakness and strength as well as brand content and its internal values.

### Prism of brand identity

When goods are not characterized by huge abundance and a big quantity of substitutes, the statement of unique sales is the principal conception. Leaving brand image, positioning and personality behind, the attention is currently drawn to the importance of brand identity (Kapferer, 2003). The understanding of brand identity signifies that superficial attitude towards brand is being changed and the importance of comprehensive brand analysis is being stressed.

The concept of identity is significant due to the reasons, indicated below:

- 1) a brand needs to be strong;
- 2) it should present brands and goods connected with it;
- 3) a brand has to be real.

Thus, brands have to be secured from the image of idealism, changeability and opportunism.

The composition of brand identity is characterized by the prism of identity (Figure 1) (Kapferer, 2003).

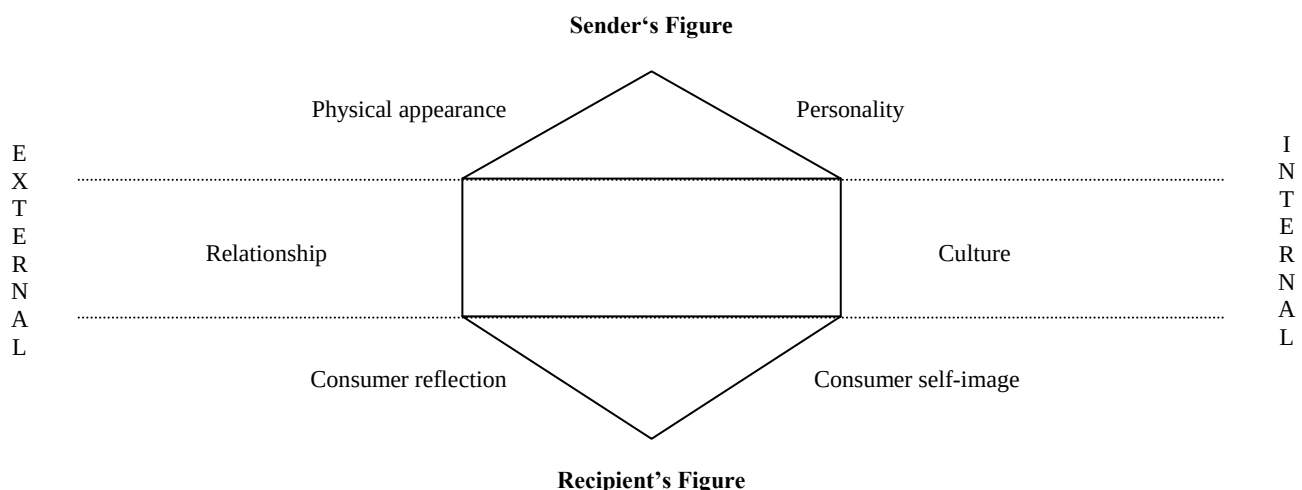


Figure 1. The prism of brand identity (J.N. Kapferer, 2003:107)

First of all brand contains an external specificity that is *physical appearance*, which is the core of brand and its value added. This determines a traditional brand management due to orientation to “know how”, classical positioning, selecting a principal good or brand features and the benefit. The first step building up a brand is the definition of physical factors, identifying what it is, what it does and how does it look like. Physical appearance is closely connected with a brand prototype, revealing the quality of a brand (for example *Coca-Cola bottles on tins of Coca-Cola*).

The second element of identity prism is brand personality. With a help of communication brand character is being developed and this is a way by which any brand “talks” about its goods and services and indicates a particular human person. The trait of personality within the

prism of identity is inner source. It should not be mixed up with the image of consumer’s reflection which is an ideal portrait of every recipient. Brand personality is described and measured using those features of consumer personality that are directly related to brands. Since 1996 the research was directed towards studies of brand personality (Kapferer, 2003).

D. Grundey (2002) claims that the success of brand expression percentage in the market depends on the choice of every element of personality and its reconciliation. Brand personality is closely connected with self-image and image of a consumer because the identification of consumers’ with a particular segment reflects brand features.

Brand is *culture*. Brands possess that culture in which they originated. Brand is a representative of its culture,

including communication. From this perspective culture entails a lot of values that provide brand with inspiration. Cultural features are correlated with external principles of brand management (a good and communication) Culture is in the core of brand.

Global brands usually reveal their culture (*Benetton, Coca-cola, IBM*). The aspect of culture enables to discover differences between other competing brands. The attention is focused on brand personality; however, eventually only those brands become leaders that possess not only personality but culture.

Brand culture is based on the culture, values and aims of an enterprise. This is one of good lineaments while comparing brands of different companies as it is not likely that two different companies will have identical cultural features (Grundey, 2002).

Countries producers are the sources of brand culture as well. However, this is not the only factor, providing value added. The degree of brand freedom is frequently restricted by the culture of a company as this is the most visible and external brand feature. Culture plays the essential role in brand differentiation as it indicated what moral values are embodied in goods and services. This feature helps identifying the strongest brands because sources, basic ideals and a set of values are revealed.

Brand includes *relationship* as brands frequently take the most important place in the process of human transactions and exchange. This is extremely reflected in the sphere of services and retail companies. This feature emphasizes the way of behavior which is identified with brand most of all. A lot of actions such as the fact how brands influence and provide services in connection to their consumers determine this feature.

According to Kapferer (2003), brand is a voice that consumers should hear because brands survive in the market because of communication. D. Grundey (2002) singles out the following ways of communication:

- Advertising and other support elements;
- Direct consumer's communication while purchasing a good.

Marketing culture of a company is extremely significant as it is a constitutive part of company's culture, manifested through the relationship of consumers and the company.

Invisible communication is created with a means of associations and its can start between people (a seller, buyer or employee) seeking for the same or different goals. Communicating it is important to reconcile different need of people and present the entire useful information allowing perceiving the essence and peculiarities of a brand.

Brand is a *customer reflection*. Consumers can easily define what goods of a particular brand are produced for a particular type of consumers (for example, *this automobile was developed only for show stars*). Brand communication and goods aim at reflecting a consumer, for whom those goods are addressed. Consumer reflection is often confused with the target market (Kapferer, 2003). The target market determines potential consumers though consumer reflection does not define target market. A consumer has to be reflected in a way, which would show

how he or she could image themselves consuming a particular good. The representatives of the target market should be presented differently from what they are but what they would like to be. Consumers use goods of certain brands seeking to create their own identity. Brands should control their consumer reflection. A constant repetition stating that this brand was developed for a certain target group weakens brand image.

*Consumer self-image*. Brand is closely related to the understanding of consumer self-image that is the features with which consumers identify themselves and the very same features they would like to be reflected by the chosen good and its brand. Consumer self-image is important in the explanation of consumer behaviour as consumers purchase goods, corresponding to their self-image.

The conception of consumer self-image includes an amount of individual ideas, thoughts and feelings about him in relationship with other objects within socially defined boundaries (Onkvisit ir Shaw, 1994). This is the understanding of an individual about his ability, semblance and characteristics on personality. The conception of consumer self-image is developed within timeframes and is based on that what a consumer sees around himself and how other consumers evaluate and respond to him. The conception is a set of beliefs about oneself, retained in memory.

The conception of consumer self-image can be determined and strengthened by examining purchase and consumption. Consumers acquire the reconciliation of oneself having positive attitude towards a certain goods of that brand (for example, *a man who identifies himself as strong and muscular will choose Marlboro" cigarettes, while a woman, identifying herself as attractive and modern will choose, Virginia Slims cigarettes*) (Graeff, 1996).

All six elements emphasize brand identity. The prism of identity originated from the basic conception that brand is marked by the gift of "speech". Brands can exist only then when they communicate. Physical appearance and personality allow determining the sender. The recipient is defined by consumer reflection and self-image. The last two elements of brand identity: culture and relationship link the sender and the recipient.

The prism of brand identity maintains a vertical subdivision: the elements on the left such as physical appearance, relationship and consumer reflection are social and provide brand with external expression (image) and are visible. The elements on the right such as personality, culture and consumer self-image are connected with the inside of a brand and its soul.

*Summing on the prism of brand identity it can be noted that it is the unit of brand identity as a live system of elements, possessing internal and external sides and determining possible limits for brand development and variation.*

### **Brand image building process**

In marketing literature great attention is focused on brand image which is studied from two: *company's and consumer's* perspectives. The approach of company is directed towards the improvement of marketing activity,

connected with strategies of positioning and retaining of a positive brand image. Consumer's approach is based on consumer's attitude towards the interpretation of brand image and brand equity. The importance of brand in the market is influenced by company's ability to evaluate the fact how consumers interpret the image of brands and company's ability to manage the strategy of brand positioning, adequately revealing brand's equity to a consumer (Kotler, 2001).

There are many definitions of brand image in marketing literature. Analyzing of the conception, the table below, presents the conception of various scientists (table1).

Table 1

| Conception of brand image |                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Source                    | Main meaning                              | Conception of brand image                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Park (1986)               | Functional, symbolic and experience image | Brand image is not a simple phenomenon of understanding, affected by communication activity of the company. This is consumer understanding of a complete brand set, developed by a company. |
| Keller (1998)             | Conception                                | Brand conception, reflecting associations in consumer's consciousness.                                                                                                                      |
| Aaker (2002)              | Associations                              | How is the brand conceived by a consumer                                                                                                                                                    |

Defining the development of brand image, it should be marked that a strong brand should have a rich and clear

identity, adequately passed to the target market. Image should reveal brand concept together with real experience, corresponding to brand understanding. A recent consumer searches and wants to experience something unique and peculiar, in connection with a brand. A mismatch of brand image with consumer expectations gives a chance to competitors.

Brand identity includes the meaning of a brand that would be decoded in the target market. Seeking to perform efficiently, brand identity should differ from that of competitors and be developed in a way, comprehensible to consumers.

Park (1986) claims that brand success in the market depends on the choice of brand identity, the usage of identity developing image, and the guarantee that image adequately transfers brand identity, chosen by a company, differentiating it from competitors and responding to a desired consumer equity. Kapferer (2003) states that brand image is the most efficient way of communication with consumers, revealing the significance of brand identity.

D. Aaker and Joachimsthaler E. (2001) mark the process of brand image development (Figure 2).

The second Figure shows brand identity and the conceptions, connected with it. Twelve categories of brand identity elements are enumerated for four purposes: brand – *good* – good limits, features, quality/equity, experience, consumers, country producer; *organizing* – company features, local orientations versus global; *personality* – brand personality, brand and consumer relationship; *symbols* – a set of visual associations, brand metaphors.

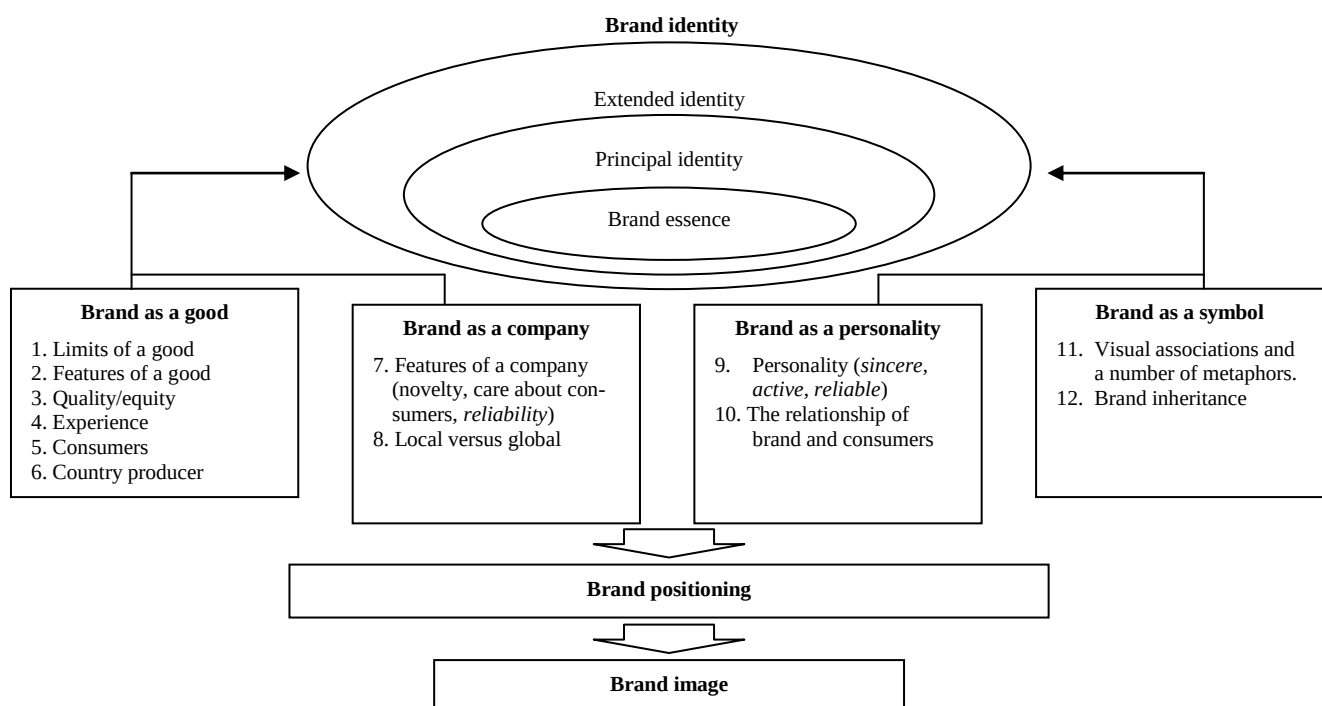


Figure 2. Modified process of brand image development (D. Aaker and E. Jochimsthaler, 2003:54)

It should be noted that the structure of brand identity consist of principal identity, extended identity and brand essence. Typically, brand identity should possess from six to twelve parameters and only in this case it could reflect that what should be achieved with a help of a

brand. According to D.Aaker and Joachimsthaler E (2003), all parameters of principal brand identity should reflect a construction strategy, usefulness and at least one association that should differentiate the brand and get the attention of consumers. Principal brand identity will not

change even though the brand might pass to another markets or good categories. If consumers accept the brand according its principal identity this means that the brand achieved its aim. The principal brand identity reveals to consumers and company employees that what is the most important.

Extended brand identity combines all identity elements that are not included into the primary identity and are subdivided into groups based on their importance.

Principal brand identity contains from two to four parameters, narrowly describing brand image. However, sometimes it is more purposeful to set a more narrow approach that determines brand essence, which is an idea, entailing brand soul. J Kapferer (2003) states that brand essence originated from a wish to generalize brand identity and positioning. Brand essence includes the principal value that is offered (for example, *Volvo is the safest car*).

Examining the process of brand image development it should be mentioned that brand *positioning* is one of the most essential stages of development. The conceptions of various authors on brand positioning are presented in table 2.

Table 2

Conceptions on positioning

| Source                          | Conceptions of brand positioning                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) | The statement of brand identity and equity is actively communicated to the target audience.                                                                                        |
| de Chernatony (2001)            | The process ensures the competition of a brand in the market and allows taking a different, significant and precious position in the consciousness of the target market consumers. |
| Kapferer (2003)                 | Emphasis of distinctive features that provide distinction in comparison with competitors and become attractive for society.                                                        |

Studying the relationship of brand identity and positioning it is possible to state that the relationship of brand identity and positioning rise from brand identity. Positioning is used as a specific aspect of identity during a particular time, in particular market and in front of exactly defined competitors.

Summing up theoretical studies of Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2003), Kapferer (2003), Keller (1998), de Chernatony (2001) and other authors it becomes obvious that the correspondence between brand identities, revealed while building brand image, and the coding of meaning by consumers should exist.

### Theoretical model of brand identity and image relationship

Scientific literature presents different models of brand identity and brand image. The following models of brand identity could be enlisted:

- De Chernatony (1999) indicated the model of brand identity and company's reputation connection. This model identifies the following elements of brand identity: brand vision, culture, relationship, personality and presentation. Empirical studies were carried out on the background of the model, evaluating the relationship of brand identity

and company's reputation. Based of the empirical studies De Chernatony (1999) claims that the gap between brand identity and the reputation of a company should be as narrow as possible.

- D. Aaker and E. Joachimsthaler (2003) single out the system of brand identity. This model of brand identity enlists twelve elements of brand identity. Besides, it should be noted that principal and extended brand identities are indicated and they provide ambiguity in the conception of brand identity.
- J.N. Kapferer's (2003) model of correlation of brand identity and image is based on processes of communication, indicating the sender – *company* and the recipient – *consumer*. J. N. Kapferer singles out six elements of brand identity: physical appearance, personality, relationship, culture, and consumer reflection and consumer self-image. The last two elements of brand identity: consumer reflection and consumer self-image are related with a consumer.

Studying the models of brand identity it can be noted that researchers unambiguously agree that brand identity has to be transferred to consumers; however, it should be noted that in some models brand image is not presented as a final result.

Analyzing various processes of brand image building, three closely connected elements are identified. They are brand identity, brand positioning and brand image.



Figure 3. Theoretical model of brand identity and image relationship

This model is based on the idea that brand identity is managed. Positive brand image that ensures a competitive advantage is build up when conveying brand identity to consumers efficiently and employing particular strategies of positioning.

### Empirical studies of Fizz brand identity and image relationship

**Research methodology.** The study of brand image employs a general marketing approach. Research process, conducting the investigation of *Fizz* brand image is based on the marketing research suggested by L. G. Shiffman and L. L. Kanuk (1987). The researchers L. G. Shiffman and L.L. Kanuk suggest starting marketing research by setting out research *aims* and *hypothesis* that are formulated afterwards (Hypothesis is an unconfirmed statement or some possible solution that can be confirmed or denied applying empirical data.) In the second stage of brand investigation, secondary data is gathered and analyzed. If data is not sufficient for achieving study objectives, the primary research will be devised that will constitute the third stage of the study. L. G. Shiffman and L.L. Kanuk suggest using qualitative and quantitative studies. First of all the method of quantitative studies is chosen and the

interview plan and its place is constructed and scheduled. The gathering of quantitative data and its analysis is completed later on. Quantitative research terminates with report preparation and the results of the research are used for qualitative studies. Therefore, the method of qualitative studies is chosen and tools for qualitative data collection are planned. After the research, the results received are analyzed, presenting final conclusions.

**The aim of the research is** to indicate the principal elements of Fizz brand identity, revealing the relationship of brand identity and image.

Results. The relationship of Fizz brand identity and image are singled out by comparing the elements of brand identity, communicated by the company and the elements of brand identity decoded by consumers. The comparison

is presented in table 3.

Examining the relationship of Fizz brand image and brand identity, physical appearance can be singled out. Consumers conceive the meaning of brand name and associations properly and mark an attractive logotype and emblems.

The third table presents personality, communicated by Fizz brand and perceived by consumers. The respondents agree with the majority of personality features, identified by the company; however, a part of the respondents do not agree with such Fizz brand personality features as innovativeness, self-confidence, sociability and being natural. The majority of the respondents disagrees that Fizz brand is sexual. In addition to this, the majority of consumers identify more features of Fizz brand personality if comparison with the company.

Table 3

**Relationship of Fizz brand identity and image**

|                     | <b>Fizz brand identity</b><br>(Company)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Fizz brand image</b><br>(Consumer)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Physical appearance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaningful name</li> <li>• Cider colour elements on the logo</li> <li>• Cider bubbles on the logo</li> <li>• Colourful fruit symbols</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sound of Fizz brand name is marked as well as the association of it with cider fizz.</li> <li>• Fizz brand logo attracts one's attention</li> <li>• Fizz brand symbols of fruits are attractive</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                             |
| Personality         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative</li> <li>• Self-confident</li> <li>• Sexual</li> <li>• Local</li> <li>• Easy</li> <li>• Natural</li> <li>• Tasteful</li> <li>• Youthful</li> <li>• Social</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Innovative</i></li> <li>• <i>Self-confident</i></li> <li>• <b>Sexual</b></li> <li>• Easy</li> <li>• <i>Natural</i></li> <li>• Tasteful</li> <li>• Youthful</li> <li>• <i>Social</i></li> <li>• <u><b>Cheerful</b></u></li> <li>• <u><b>Energetic</b></u></li> <li>• <u><b>Soft</b></u></li> </ul>                                                       |
| Relationship        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Wide assortment</i>, seeking to satisfy the needs of consumers.</li> <li>• <i>Various packages</i>: tins of a half a litre covered with foil, preserving sterility; plastic bottles of one litre and a half, designed for a group of friends</li> <li>• <i>The advertising</i> reminding and informing on television, Internet, press, bars and night clubs.</li> <li>• <i>Various actions and sponsorship of events</i>.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fizz cider tins of aluminum foil provide sterility</li> <li>• Attractive advertising reminds and stimulates the consumption of Fizz which is the most important element of relationship with consumers.</li> <li>• The majority of respondents does not participate in actions and state that this is not important for them.</li> </ul>                   |
| Culture             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural ingredients are used in the production process and unique recipes are retained.</li> <li>• There are no environment protection and charity activities.</li> <li>• The lack of solid communication among employees.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers evaluate the reputation of the company and the process of Fizz cider production most of all.</li> <li>• Environmental protection activity would be important for a half of the respondents.</li> <li>• Participation of the company in charity and sponsorship activities as well as the relationship of employees are not important.</li> </ul> |

Consumers indicate such features as cheerfulness, energy and softness. In the relationship of Fizz brand and consumer direct communication could be marked as consumers evaluate the aluminum foil covered Fizz cider tins positively as this provides sterility. In addition to this, an attractive advertising is mentioned as the most significant element, encouraging choosing Fizz cider. Various actions and games organized are not important in relationship with Fizz brand. Analyzing the relationship of Fizz brand identity and culture it is possible to note that consumers evaluate the process

of Fizz cider production positively as natural ingredients are used. Besides, a half of the respondents regard the environmental protection activity that is not performed by the company to be important. However, employee relationship and various charity and sponsorship activities, which appear to be the weakest side of the company's culture, are not important for consumers.

*Summing up the relationship of Fizz brand identity and image it is possible to confirm that the relationship of Fizz brand identity and image exists.*



## Conclusions

*After the completion of theoretical and empirical studies, the following conclusions can be drawn:*

- On the background of the conceptual analysis of brand identity and summarizing the opinion of majority researchers, brand identity is defined as a concept, including brand uniqueness, meaning, purpose, values and individuality.
- Carrying out theoretical studies of brand identity sources it can be claimed that sources build up the content of brand identity and inner values as well as indicate the limits of brand strength and weakness.
- The analysis of brand prism and other models of brand identity indicate that brand identity contains a multidimensional structure, including from six to twelve elements. Brand identity is made up by the unit of elements with different importance, defining possible boundaries of brand development and variation.
- Summarizing theoretical studies of brand identity and image relationship and after the analysis of various brand image building processes, presented by different authors, it can be stated that three closely connected elements: brand identity, brand positioning and brand image include the relationship of brand identity and image. The relationship of the elements indicated above is based on the process that starts from the definition of brand identity by the company and culminates with the perception of brand image by a consumer.
- On the basis of theoretical brand image and identity analysis, the theoretical model of brand identity and image relationships was constructed that joins up brand identity, brand positioning and brand image. Therefore, the conclusion that this is a recurring process, using which a company is capable of managing brand identity, could be drawn.

After the completion of empirical studies of Fizz brand identity and image relationship the following conclusions can be made:

- Such features of Fizz brand as youthfulness, easiness, cheerfulness, energy, tastefulness and softness were identified as the most important.
- Fizz brand has a meaningful name, positive associations, attractive logotype and colorful emblems.
- Consumers evaluate the reputation of the company and the process of Fizz cider production most of all. In addition to this a big part of the respondents is interested in environmental protection activity of the company.
- In the relationship of Fizz brand and consumers the advertising and price discounts are evaluated most of all. Loyalty programs and price discounts are not so much important.
- The relationship of Fizz brand identity and image really exists. The principal relationship of

Fizz brand identity and image include the following elements of brand identity: physical appearance, relationship and personality.

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### Prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajos

Santrauka

Globalizacijos, naujų technologijų, intensyvios konkurencijos, kintančios vartotojų paklausos ir ekonominių bei politinių sistemų pokyčiai kelia naujų iššūkių verslo įmonėms. Įmonės, norinčios pasiekti geresnių rezultatų rinkoje nei konkurentai, turi įgyti ir išlaikyti unikalumą, kurio negalima imituoti ir kuris suteiktų konkurencinį pranašumą. Vienas iš tokių sunkiai imituojamų išteklių yra įmonės turimas prekės ženklas.

Prekės ženklas pats savaime neužtikrina įmonės konkurencinio pranašumo rinkoje. Gerų rezultatų pasiekia tik įmonės, gebančios valdyti prekės ženklą perteikiant jo identitetą (angl. *Identity*), apibrėžiant jo elementus, unikalumą bei vertę. Prekės ženklo įvaizdžio kūrimas perteikiant vartotojui prekės ženklo identitetą sustiprina įmonės pozicijas intensyvios konkurencijos sąlygomis.

Prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio mokslinius bei empirinius tyrimus atlieka tokie mokslininkai kaip: J.L. Kapferer (1997; 2003), L. de Chernatony (1999, 2001), D. Aaker ir E. Joachimsthaler (1997, 2003), L. Keller (1993, 1998), F. Melin (1997), L. Upshaw (1995) ir kiti, tačiau šioje srityje stokojama kryptingumo bei vientisumo, siekiant išryškinti prekės ženklo identiteto elementus su prekės ženklo įvaizdžiu.

Siekiant kad vartotojas pasirinktų būtent įmonės siūlomą prekę iš daugelio rinkoje siūlomų, įmonėms būtina išskirti prekę iš konkurentų atliekant prekės ženklo identiteto teorinius ir empirinius tyrimus, išryškinant pagrindinius prekės ženklo identiteto elementus ir jų sąsajas su prekės ženklo įvaizdžiu.

**Problema** – darbe sprendžiama problema, susijusi su prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajomis.

**Straipsnio objektas** – prekės ženklo identiteto elementai ir jų sąsajos su prekės ženklo įvaizdžiu.

**Straipsnio tikslas** – teoriškai pagrindus prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajas, atlikti prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajų empirinį tyrimą.

#### Straipsnio uždaviniai:

- 1) Apibrėžti ir teoriškai pagrįsti prekės ženklo identiteto koncepciją.
- 2) Išstudijuoti ir apibendrinti prekės ženklo identiteto šaltinius.
- 3) Išanalizuoti prekės ženklo identiteto elementus.
- 4) Atlikti prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajų teorinę analizę.
- 5) Parengti prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajų tyrimo modelį.
- 6) Atlikti prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajų empirinį tyrimą

**Tyrimo metodika.** Sisteminė bei palyginamoji mokslinės literatūros analizė, antrinių duomenų analizė, kokybiniai bei kiekybiniai tyrimai. Kokybinuose tyrimuose naudojamas fokusuotos grupės metodas, kiekybinuose tyrimuose naudojamas anketinės apklausos metodas.

#### Prekės ženklo identiteto koncepcija

Intensyvi konkurencija reikalauja esminių prekių ženklų valdymo veiksmų, t.y. prekės ženklo identiteto nustatymo, apibrėžiant jo bruožus, unikalumą bei vertę.

Prekės ženklo identiteto koncepcija apima tai, kas suteikia prekės ženklui reikšmę ir padaro jį unikali. Prekės ženklas apima prekės charakteristikas ir rinkinį kitų veiksmų, apimančių prekės ženklo identitetą. Tai nauja koncepcija, tačiau, kai skirtumų tarp prekių tam tikroje kategorijoje pradėjo mažėti, ji tapo pagrindiniu nagrinėjamu dalyku (Melin, 1997). Identitetas apima moralinį veidą, tikslą bei vertybes, o tai sudaro individualumo esmę dife-

rencijuojant prekės ženklą (de Chernatony, 2002). Stipriausių prekės ženklų identitetas apima emocinę naudą, kuri suteikia prekės ženklui stiprumą. Tačiau, perteikiant vertę vartotojui, prekė turi teikti ir funkcinę naudą. Papildoma vertė taip pat suteikiama, jeigu prekė teikia savi-raiškos naudą, kuri atspindi paties vartotojo įvaizdį (Aaker, 1996). Pasak J. Kapferer, prekės ženklo identitetą galima apibrėžti atsakant į šiuos klausimus:

- Kokia yra prekės ženklo individuali vizija bei tikslas?
- Kas jam suteikia išskirtinumą?
- Kaip galima suteikti pasitenkinimą?
- Kokia prekės ženklo vertė?
- Kokia jo kompetencija? Jo pagrįstumas ir teisėtumas?
- Kokie jo atpažinimo bruožai?

Ši nauja koncepcija pasirodė prekių ženklų valdyme. Ji gerai žinoma pozicionuojant prekių ženklus bei formuojant jų įvaizdį. Kaip teigia de Chernatony (2001), prekės ženklo identiteto koncepcija siūlo galimybę geriau pozicionuoti prekės ženklą, ir skatina strateginį požiūrį jį valdant. Gerai valdoma identiteto sistema suteikia konkurencinį pranašumą, kai siekiama apsaugoti nuo konkurentų.

Apibendrinant galima teigti, kad prekės ženklo identiteto koncepcija apima prekės ženklo unikalumą, reikšmę, tikslą, vertybes, individualumą, suteikia galimybę geriau pozicionuoti prekės ženklą, taip įgyjamas konkurencinis pranašumas.

Norint apibrėžti prekės ženklo identitetą, jo stiprumą ir silpnumą ribas, reikia žinoti jo identiteto šaltinius. Kiekvienas valdomas prekės ženklas ilgainiui gali prarasti savo nepriklausomybę ir reikšmę. Gali sumažėti jo laisvės laipsnis, augant prekės ženklo tikrumui, jo elementai įgyja formą ir apibrėžia leistiną jo teritoriją.

Identiteto atskleidimas prasideda nuo tipinių prekių ar paslaugų, patvirtinančių prekės ženklą, simbolį, logotipą, kilmės šalį, reklamavimą bei pakuotę. J. Kapferer (2003) išskiria šiuos identiteto šaltinius:

*Prekė* – pirmasis identiteto šaltinis. Prekės ženklas atskleidžia savo planą ir savo prekių bei paslaugų unikalumą. Tikras prekės ženklas dažniausiai nelieka vien tik atspausdintu užrašu ant prekės. Prekės ženklas perteikia savo vertes į prekių gamybos bei paskirstymo procesą. Tai sudaro ir paslaugų pardavimo esmę. Prekės ženklas vertybės turi būti įkūnytos prekės ženklo simbole. Kaip teigia pažintinės psichologijos atstovai (Kleiber, 1990; Lakof, 1987), lengviau yra apibrėžti tam tikras kategorijas parodant jų tipiškiausius dalis negu tiksliai nusakyti tuos prekės atributus, kurie reikalauja apgalvotų tų kategorijų dalių. *Vardas* – tai antrasis prekės ženklo identiteto šaltinis. Prekės ženklo vardas yra vienas galingiausių identiteto šaltinių. Tyrinėjant prekės ženklo vardą, atskleidžiami jo pranašumo bruožai: teisingumo ribos ir „know-how“, taip pat kompetencijos sfera. Prekės ženklas yra įmonių kapitalas, o emblema yra prekės ženklo kapitalo teisingumas. Emblema simbolizuoja prekės ženklo identitetą per vizualinį atvaizdą. *Vizualiniai simboliai ir logotipai* – tai trečiasis prekės ženklo identiteto šaltinis. Vizualiniai simboliai ir logotipai padeda suprasti prekės ženklo kultūrą ir asmeniškumą. Jie dažniausiai pasirenkami siekiant susieti grafinį identitetą su prekės ženklo asmeniškumo elementais ir vertybėmis.

Svarbu tai, kad šie simboliai ir logotipai ne tik padeda identifikuoti prekės ženklą, bet ir prekės ženklas yra identifikuojamas kartu su jais. Kitas prekės ženklo identiteto šaltinis – *prekės ženklo įkūrėjas*. Prekės ženklo identiteto negalima nesusieti su įkūrėjo identitetu. Galima įžvelgti daug Richardo Bransono bruožų *Virgin* prekės ženklo identitete. Svarbus prekės ženklo identiteto šaltinis yra *komunikacija: turinys ir forma*. Prekės ženklai turi kalbos dovaną. Jie gali egzistuoti tik tada, kai jie komunikuoja. Nuo tada, kai pradeda „kalbėti“, jie turi nuolat pranešti apie savo prekes bei paslaugas. Komunikuojant visada pasakoma daugiau negu galvojama. Bet koks komunikacijos būdas pasako apie siuntėją, šaltinį, apie gavėją, kuriam adresuojama, ir apie santykius, kuriuos stengiamasi sukurti tarp jų. *Apibendrinant prekės ženklo identiteto šaltinius, galima teigti, kad šie šeši elementai – prekė, vardas, simbolis ir logotipas, komunikacija, personažas ir įkūrėjas apibrėžia prekės ženklo identitetą, jo stiprumą ir silpnumą ribas, prekės ženklo turinį bei jo vidines vertybes.*

#### Prekės ženklo identiteto prizmė

Prekių nepasižyminčių didele gausa bei dideliu pakaitalų kiekiu, unikalaus pardavimo teiginys buvo pagrindinė koncepcija. Paliekant prekės ženklo įvaizdį, pozicionavimą ir asmeniškumą praityje, dabar yra žvelgiama į prekės ženklo identiteto svarbą (Kapferer, 2003).

Pirmiausia prekės ženklas turi išorinį specifiškumą – *fizinę išvaizdą*. Fizinė išvaizda yra prekės ženklo pagrindas ir jo pridėtinė vertė. Tai apibūdina tradicinį prekių ženklų valdymą: orientavimasis į „know-how“, klasikinį pozicionavimą, pasirenkant pagrindinę prekę ar prekės ženklo požymius bei naudą. Pirmasis žingsnis kuriant prekės ženklą yra jo fizinių aspektų

apibrėžimas: kas jis yra, ką jis daro, kaip jis atrodo.

Fizinė išvaizda susijusi su prekės ženklo prototipu – pagrindine preke, kuri rodo prekės ženklo kokybę (pvz., *Cocacola buteliukas ant Cocacola skardinės*).

Antrasis identiteto prizmės elementas – prekės ženklo *asmeniškumas* (angl. *personality*). Komunikacijos dėka sukuriamas prekės ženklo charakteris. Tai būdas, kuriuo prekės ženklas „kalba“ apie savo prekes ar paslaugas, parodo tam tikrą žmogišką asmenybę. Identiteto prizmėje asmeniškumo bruožas yra vidinis šaltinis. Jis negali būti painiojamas su vartotojo atspindžio įvaizdžiu, kuris yra idealus kiekvieno gavėjo portretas. Prekės ženklo asmeniškumas yra aprašomas ir matuojamas tais vartotojo asmenybės bruožais, kurie tiesiogiai susiję su prekių ženklais. Nuo 1996 metų moksliniai tyrimai orientavosi į prekės ženklo asmeniškumą (Kapferer, 2003). Globalūs prekių ženklai pateikia savo kultūrą (Benetton, Coca-cola, IBM). Kultūros aspektas padeda suprasti konkuruojančių prekių ženklų skirtumą. Daug dėmesio skiriama prekės ženklo asmeniškumui, tačiau ilgainiui lyderiais tampa tie, kurie turi ne tik asmenybę, bet ir kultūrą. Prekės ženklo kultūra remiasi įmonės kultūra, jos tikslais ir vertybėmis. Tačiau tai nėra vienintelis veiksnys, suteikiantis pridėtinę vertę. Kultūra sieja prekės ženklą su įmone. Prekės ženklo laisvės laipsnis dažnai apribojamas įmonės kultūros, kadangi tai yra labiausiai matomas prekės ženklo išorinis bruožas. Kultūra vaidina pagrindinį vaidmenį prekių ženklų diferenciacijoje. Ji parodo, kokios moralinės vertybės įkūnytos prekėse ir paslaugose. Šis bruožas padeda atskirti stipriausius prekių ženklus, kadangi nurodomi šaltiniai, pagrindiniai idealai ir vertybių rinkinys. Prekės ženklas- tai *santykiai*. Prekės ženklas dažnai tenka svarbiausia vieta žmonių sandorių ir mainų procese. Tai labiausiai atspindi paslaugų sferoje bei mažmeninės prekybos įmonėse. Šis bruožas pabrėžia elgesio būdą, labiausiai sutapatinamą su prekės ženklu. Tai apibrėžia daugybę veiksmų: kaip prekės ženklas veikia, suteikia paslaugas, susijusias su savo vartotojais. Prekės ženklas – tai *vartotojo atspindys* (angl. *customer reflection*). Vartotojai gali nesunkiai apibrėžti, kokiam vartotojų tipui tam tikro prekės ženklo sukurta prekė yra skirta (pvz., *šis automobilis tik šou žvaigždėms*). Prekės ženklo komunikacija ir jo prekės stengiasi atspindėti vartotoją, kuriam jos adresuojamos. Vartotojo atspindys dažnai painiojamas su tiksline rinka (Kapferer, 2003). Tikslinė rinka apibrėžia potencialius vartotojus. Vartotojo atspindys neapibrėžia tikslinės rinkos. Vartotojas turi būti atspindėtas taip, kaip jis ar ji nori matyti save naudojant tam tikrą prekę. Tikslinės rinkos atstovai turėtų būti pateikiami ne tokie, kokie jie yra, o tokie, kokie jie norėtų būti. Vartotojai vartoja prekės ženklų prekes siekdami sukurti savo identitetą. Prekių ženklai turi kontroliuoti savo vartotojo atspindį. Nuolatinis kartojimas, kad šis prekės ženklas sukurtas tik tam tikrai tikslinei grupei, silpnina prekės ženklo įvaizdį.

*Vartotojo savivaizdis* (angl. *self- image*). Prekės ženklas glaudžiai sietinas su vartotojo savivaizdžio suvokimu- jis ir norėtų, kad pasirinkta prekė ir jo ženklas atspindėtų tuos bruožus, su kuriais save tapatina vartotojas. Vartotojo savivaizdis yra svarbus aiškinant vartotojo elgseną, nes vartotojai dažniausiai perka tas prekes, kurios atitinka savivaizdį.

Vartotojo savivaizdžio koncepcija apima bendrą sumą individo idėjų, minčių ir jausmų apie save santykiuose su kitais objektais, neperžiangiant socialiai apibrėžtų rėmų (Onkvisit ir Shaw, 1994). Tai individo supratimas apie savo paties gebėjimą, atrodymą ir charakteristikas, apimančias asmenybę. Vartotojo savivaizdžio koncepcija yra kuriama laike ir pagrįsta tuo, ką jis mano apie save, taip pat ir tuo, kaip kiti vartotojai jį vertina ir reaguoja į jį. Ši koncepcija- tai žinių ir tikėjimo apie save rinkinys, laikomas atmintyje. *Apibendrinant prekės ženklo identiteto prizmę galima teigti, kad tai prekės ženklo identiteto kaip gyvos sistemos elementų visuma, turinti išorinę bei vidinę puses, apibrėžianti leistinas prekės ženklo vystymosi ir kitimo ribas.*

#### **Prekės ženklo įvaizdžio formavimo procesas**

Marketingo literatūroje daug dėmesio skiriama prekės ženklo įvaizdžiui. Prekės ženklo įvaizdis nagrinėjamas dviem požiūriais – *įmonės ir vartotojo*. Įmonės požiūris orientuotas į marketingo veiklos pagerinimą, susijusį su pozicionavimo strategijomis bei teigiamo prekės ženklo įvaizdžio išlaikymu. Vartotojo požiūris- tai vartotojų pagrįstas požiūris, kuris orientuojasi į prekės ženklo įvaizdžio interpretacijas ir prekės ženklo vertę. Prekės ženklo reikšmė

rinkoje priklauso nuo įmonės sugebėjimo įvertinti, kaip vartotojai interpretuoja prekės ženklo įvaizdį, ir įmonės gebėjimo valdyti prekės ženklo pozicionavimo strategiją adekvačiai perteikiant vartotojui vertę (Kotler, 2001). Apibrėžiant prekės ženklo įvaizdžio kūrimą, pažymima, kad stiprus prekės ženklas turi turėti turtingą ir aiškų identitetą, kuris būtų adekvačiai perteikiamas tikslinei rinkai. Įvaizdis turi perteikti prekės ženklo koncepciją su realia patirtimi, atitinkančia prekės ženklo supratimą. Dabartinis vartotojas ieško ir nori patirti kažką unikalaus ir ypatingo, susijusio su prekės ženklu. Prekės ženklo įvaizdžio neatiktis vartotojo lūkesčių suteikia progą veikti konkurentams.

*Apibendrinant teorines Aaker ir Joachimsthaler (2003), Kapferer (2003), Keller (1998), de Chernatony (2001) ir kitų autorių studijas, galima teigti, kad nėra abejonės, jog prekės ženklo identiteto atitikties, kuri perteikiama kuriant prekės ženklo įvaizdį, ir vartotojų prekės ženklo reikšmės dekodavimo, turi egzistuoti.*

#### **Prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajų teorinis modelis**

Mokslinėje literatūroje pateikiami skirtingi prekės ženklo identiteto bei prekės ženklo įvaizdžio modeliai.

Nagrinėjant prekės ženklo identiteto modelius galima pastebėti, kad mokslininkai vienareikšmiškai sutinka, jog prekės ženklo identitetas turi būti perteikiamas vartotojui. Tačiau pažymima, kad kai kuriuose modeliuose prekės ženklo įvaizdis nėra pateikiamas kaip galutinis rezultatas.

Analizuojant įvairių autorių išskiriamus prekės ženklo įvaizdžio kūrimo procesus, galima pastebėti, kad yra išskiriami trys susiję elementai: *prekės ženklo identitetas, prekės ženklo pozicionavimas ir prekės ženklo įvaizdis.*

#### **Fizz prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajų empirinis tyrimas**

**Tyrimo metodologija.** Prekės ženklo įvaizdžio tyrimuose taikomos bendrosios marketingo tyrimų metodologinės nuostatos. Atlikdami *Fizz* prekės ženklo įvaizdžio tyrimą, remsimės L. G. Shiffman ir L. L. Kanuk (1987) siūlomu marketingo tyrimo proceso nuoseklumu. L. G. Shiffman ir L. L. Kanuk marketingo tyrimą siūlo pradėti nuo *tikslų ir hipotezių* nustatymo. Tai atlikus formuluojamos hipotezės (hipotezė – tai neįrodytas teiginys ar tam tikras galimas sprendimas, kuris, remiantis empiriniais duomenimis, gali būti patvirtintas arba paneigtas). Antrajame prekės ženklo įvaizdžio tyrimo proceso etape renkami antriniai duomenys ir atliekama jų analizė. Jeigu tyrimo tikslams pasiekti šių duomenų nepakanka, projektuojamas pirminis tyrimas. Tai trečiasis marketingo tyrimo etapas. L. G. Shiffman ir L. L. Kanuk siūlo kokybinius ir kiekybinius tyrimus. Pirmiausia pasirenkamas kokybinio tyrimo metodas, sudaromas pokalbio planas ir numatoma jo aplinka. Toliau renkami kokybinių tyrimo duomenys ir analizuojami. Kokybinis tyrimas baigiamas ataskaitos parengimu. Atlikto kokybinio tyrimo rezultatai naudojami projektuojant kiekybinį tyrimą. Parenkamas kiekybinio tyrimo metodas, sudaromas tyrimo planas ir numatomos duomenų rinkimo priemonės. Atlikus tyrimą, analizuojami gauti rezultatai ir pateikiamos išvados.

**Tyrimo tikslas** – nustatyti pagrindinius *Fizz* prekės ženklo identiteto elementus, atskleidžiant prekės ženklo identiteto bei įvaizdžio sąsajas.

**Tyrimo rezultatai.** *Fizz* prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajos išskiriamos, lyginant įmonės komunikuojamą prekės ženklo identiteto elementus ir vartotojų dekoduojamą prekės ženklo identiteto elementus.

Analizuojant *Fizz* prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajas, galima išskirti *Fizz* prekės ženklo fizinę išvaizdą. Vartotojai tinkamai supranta prekės ženklo vardo reikšmę, jo asociacijas, išskiria patrauklų logotipą bei emblemas.

Analizuojant *Fizz* prekės ženklo identiteto- kultūros sąsajas, galima teigti, kad vartotojai teigiamai vertina sidro *Fizz* gamybos procesą naudojant natūralias medžiagas. Dar reiktų pažymėti, kad beveik pusei respondentų yra svarbi aplinkosauginė veikla, kurios įmonė nevykdo. Be to, galima išskirti tai, kad vartotojams nėra svarbūs darbuotojų tarpusavio santykiai bei labdaros ir paramos veikla. Dalis respondentų nesutinka su tokiais *Fizz* prekės ženklo asmeniškumo bruožais kaip novatoriškas, pasitikintis, socialus bei natūralus. Didžioji dalis respondentų nepritaria, kad *Fizz* prekės ženklas yra seksualus. Taip pat pažymėtina, kad vartotojai išskiria daugiau *Fizz* prekės ženklo asmeniškumo bruožų negu įmonė. Vartotojai išskiria ir *Fizz* prekės ženklo linksmumą, energingumą bei švelnumą. *Apibendrinant Fizz prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajas, galima teigti, kad Fizz prekės ženklo identiteto ir įvaizdžio sąsajų esama.*

**Raktažodžiai:** *prekės ženklo identitetas, prekės ženklo įvaizdis, prekės ženklo pozicionavimas.*

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