

THE STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE OF B2B BRANDING

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Abstract

In this article the B2B advertising, branding and its strategic advantage is being discussed. The paper throws light on the growth of E commerce/ E business and the increasing interest of marketing managers of Business of Business towards branding, promoting and advertenting their products. Over the last few years lot of innovations have taken place in Business to Business market and the importance of branding and advertisement have gone to higher levels and are driving the organization from the front . Not only this but the core strategy group of the organization have been taking lot of interest in branding and its long term affect on the performance of the Organization.

Key Words: Advertising, Business, Branding, Strategic Advantage.

Introduction

With the growth of E commerce/ E business, the marketers of Business to Business have been showing lot of interest in Business to Business advertising and subsequently its branding in new & innovative ways. Although in consumer markets the concept of advertising and branding is well established that leads the transition of a product to a brand in the new economy. The organizations have been working very hard to improve their competitive position and in this endeavor, corporate branding can help a lot. On the branding ladder, the challenge for marketers is to go beyond the symbols, metaphors and logo's and to create a sustainable value in the minds of customers & potential customers. The starting point of any genuine and serious branding strategy research is to work out that what is the most important and the most unique value that the organization offers to the business world. Now at this stage it is important to understand the real difference between a product and a brand. The two get confused very often as many companies assign names to their products believing that the so called brand is being recognized by the consumer markets. All of these brands are just labels of the products that the organization

offers. Most of the organizations are unaware of the cost, consistency, attention, efforts strategies & the process (life cycle) of the transition of a product to a brand. Every Business to Business brand needs a strong promotional effort & cost, backed by a well thought strategy. The proliferation of these so called brands end up either creating temporary or permanent damage to the corporate brand or the organization. The Business to business brand is most often the organization itself and the product labels or the sub brands of the "real brands" are the brand extensions of organization itself.

Why Business to business Branding ?

With the huge success of consumer branding the question is how to do the branding for a B2B organization manufacturing a shoe sole, or a shoe lace, a company providing nuts & screws or pressing metal pieces for another company ? Although the answer is obviously yes and of course B2B branding is already accepted by the B2B customers, but it is not working to its real efficacy & effectiveness. Many industrial firms have customers to whom they have supplied for so many years. These customers buy trust and their business relationship is based on loyalty and long term mutually beneficial relationship. Very few buyers would change their

vendors/suppliers if a new organization approaches them and offers the same goods at 10% less price. One more question that has to be answered at this stage is “what makes an organization purchase a particular product over and above its competitors. If a marketer wants to attach value to a product then one needs to understand the value a brand carries. It is the reliability, the trust, the quality, the value for money or all wrapped in a package called value for money

Importance of B-B Advertising

Realizing the strategic importance of business to business branding the marketers are focusing on the use of advertisements . The innovations in advertisement are giving lot of mileage to organizations in placing themselves as well as their products above their competitors at market place In order to understand and apply if further to higher levels, the business to business marketers will have to understand the following concepts very well

- 1- The various channels for B2B Advertisements
- 2- Effectiveness of B2B advertisements
- 3- Content, message, theme of these advertisements
- 4- The frequency & consistency of these advertisements
- 5- The strategic alignment of these B2B advertisements with the strategic vision of the organization
- 6- The different models and methodologies of B2B advertising
- 7- Benchmarking successful B2B advertisements

A brief understanding of the above mentioned points

- 1- The various channels for B2B advertisements
 - The effective use of social media for B2B advertising
 - The use of E commerce for B2B advertising
 - The use of traditional media, electronic media and print media

- Effective use of advertising for branding and branding for advertising
- 2- Effectiveness of B2B Advertisements
 - Measuring the effectiveness of B2B advertisement & branding
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of different media
 - Incorporating the impact of different media on advertising strategies of B2B advertising
 - Designing new & innovative tools to measure the effectiveness of B2B advertising
 - 3- Content, message and theme of B2B advertisements
 - Understanding the content engagement of Business to business advertising
 - Viral advertising in B2B
 - Alignment of the message & theme of Business to business advertising with the philosophy of the organization
 - 4- The frequency & consistency of the advertising
 - Its very important to decide on the frequency of business to business advertizing
 - The consistency of the B2B advertising has to be maintained so that it contributes considerable forwards the development of the brand
 - 5- The strategic view of B2B advertising
 - All the B2B advertisements have to be strategic in nature
 - The strategy of the B2B advertising has to be integrated with the strategic vision of the organization
 - 6- The different models and methodologies B2B advertising
 - Understand the Business to business advertising methodologies
 - Understand the new technologies and innovations in Business to business advertising
 - Understand and develop new models in B2B advertising

7- Benchmarking successful B2B Advertisements

- It is very important for industry to benchmark its advertisements
- Learning from the most successful B2B advertising campaigns
- Also learning from the past failures

B2B Branding

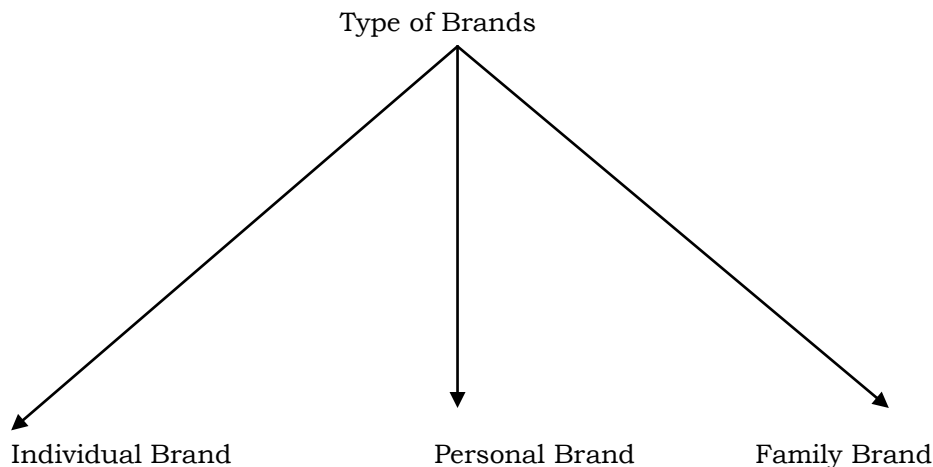
The meaning of a brand is “to create a unique logo, design, name and a different image in the mind of the consumers towards, a product A brand is a constant effort of marketing backed by a strategy that results

in trust, value and unique identity. Few of the attributes that contributes towards business to business branding are

- 1- Brand differentiation
- 2- Brand uniqueness
- 3- Brand awareness & knowledge of the product
- 4- Brand quality and consistency
- 5- Brand equity
- 6- Trust in the brand

Before being able to create a successful brand the marketing manager has to ensure that the product passes the above test of uniqueness, quality, consistency and image in the minds of the customers

Type of Brands



- 1- Individual Brand – It is also called a product branding or a multi branding. Under this category all the products are different from each other in the same organization
 - 2- Family Brand – Family brand is also called umbrella brand. Under this brand category, different product are being sold under one brand name
 - 3- Personal brand – This kind of brand is related to an individual personality or style of a person and this defines the different characteristics an individual personality
- Brand Equity –

Brand equity is an intangible asset based on image perception, loyalty and trust. Brand equity is a set of assets & liabilities linked to a particular brand that adds or subtracts value of a product or a service. factors that influence brand equity are

- 1- Familiarity
- 2- Loyalty
- 3- Image
- 4- Awareness
- 5- Preferences
- 6- Trust

Conclusions:

The above study says that quality of a product or a service is very important in any business to business format. The marketers have started realizing that business to business advertising has got a strategic value and advantage for the products, organizations and well as for the consumers. It focuses on the quality, consistency, trust and providing value to the customers. Just like consumer advertisements, Business to business to business advertisement have created their worth and it has taken a driving seat. Lot of innovations and experiments in developing new methodologies have been taking place in this domain which is a very healthy sign for business of business. Hope that business to business advertisement will definitely create a new benchmark in coming times and will benefit all the stake holders

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