

Brand Manipulation Techniques Employed by Marketers: Learning Organizational Strategies

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Abstract

Brands work to achieve an advantage in the fiercely cutthroat world of contemporary business by grabbing consumers' attention and swaying their judgments. This study explores the complex world of brand-manipulation tactics used by advertisers, concentrating on the underlying organizational principles that direct their application. The present research offers light on the varied strategies used by marketing to alter consumer perceptions, emotions, and preferences by looking at a number of sectors and case studies. The study examines a variety of approaches, including emotional advertising, scarcity strategies, the use of societal proof, and cognitive bias exploitation.

Keywords: brand manipulation, consumer psychology, consumer perceptions, marketing, emotional advertising

Introduction

In today's highly competitive business environment, brand manipulation techniques have emerged as a key component of marketing plans. Marketers use a variety of strategies to sway consumers' views, feelings, and actions in favor of their products. This study explores the historical examination of these methods, backed up by statistics and real-world examples, illuminating how businesses use them to accomplish their advertising objectives.

Background/ Rationale

Because it helps marketers to communicate a company's values, history, and mission in a compelling story, narrative is an effective instrument for manipulating perceptions of a brand. A renowned illustration of effective brand storytelling is Airbnb (Zhou & Xue, 2021). In the "Belong Anywhere" campaign, actual accounts of people who implemented Airbnb to forge unique and unforgettable experiences are portrayed. In addition to promoting its services, Airbnb creates an emotional connection with potential clients by sharing these stories. A powerful strategy employed by marketers to create enduring emotional bonds between customers and businesses is emotional branding. Companies can foster enduring loyalty to their brands by appealing to consumers' emotions. A study by Psychology & Marketing found that emotional branding can boost brand loyalty by more than 80% (Kemp, Briggs, & Anaza, 2020).

As opined by Zhang *et al.* (2020), scarcity and fear are frequently used by marketing to influence buyer behavior. Consumers' fear of missing out (FOMO) is stoked by time-sensitive deals, exclusive affiliations, or statements like "only a handful left." This motivates buying on impulse. Apple masterfully employs this strategy during product debuts to instill a sense of urgency surrounding their latest offerings. This strategy causes pre-ordering frenzy and huge queues outside Apple stores, which enhances their reputation as a company and increases sales (Szabo & Webster, 2021). The bandwagon effect takes advantage of people's desire to follow

trends and blend along with the crowd. This tactic is used by marketers to provide the impression that a brand is well-liked and acknowledged. Social media platforms frequently show how many fans or following a brand has, enticing additional users to sign up (Carlini & Grace, 2021).

Rationale

The choice of the appropriate influences presents a hurdle. The public's perception of a brand may suffer if an influencer's beliefs or behavior are at odds with the beliefs of the company. For instance, Logan Paul's endorsements dropped when he made an offensive video in Japan's "suicide forest," as a result of his impolite actions (Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2020). Creating a sense of urgency and exclusivity can encourage customers to make hasty purchases. Timer countdowns, low-stock notifications, and exclusive offers can all prompt quick action. Consumer skepticism may result from the overuse of these strategies. Consumers could grow resistant to such tactics if they think that scarcity and urgency are created. The "going out of company" sale, which never seems to end, is a prime example of how confidence within a company may be damaged (Nurnafia, 2021).

In the modern highly competitive market environment, branding has taken on a crucial function in influencing customer opinions and influencing purchasing behavior. Marketers are aware how important it is to influence consumer behavior by influencing consumer perceptions in addition to building great brands (Li *et al.* 2021). The topic of this article explores the world of brand manipulation techniques used by advertising professionals, illuminating the tactics used by businesses to control and influence consumer perceptions.

Aims and objectives

Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate how brand manipulation techniques employed by marketers affect marketing strategies

Objectives

- To analyze the various brand manipulation techniques employed by marketers
- To examine the organizational strategies that facilitate the implementation of brand manipulation techniques
- To assess the ethical implications and consequences of brand manipulation strategies on consumers and society

Research questions

- What are the key brand manipulation techniques commonly used by marketers to influence consumer behavior and perception?
- How do organizations integrate brand manipulation techniques into their marketing strategies, and what internal factors facilitate or hinder their implementation?
- What are the ethical considerations surrounding the use of brand manipulation techniques, and what impact do these techniques have on consumer trust and societal well-being?

Literature review

As said by Wang *et al.* (2021), the manipulation of consumer perceptions and emotions is a common practice in the field of modern advertising. Different tactics are used by marketing to mold and sway consumer opinions towards brands. This review of the literature explores the brand modification strategies used by marketers and looks at how businesses plan to use these strategies successfully. The idea of emotional branding theory, which has its roots in the writings of Aaker (1997) and Fournier (1998), contends that consumer-brand relationships have a significant impact on loyalty to a brand and choice. By creating brand storylines that emotionally connect with customers, advertisers make use of this notion. Brands elicit emotions that create lasting ties with customers through storytelling, imagery, and related experiences (Mansor & Isa, 2020). For instance, the Coca-

Cola Company frequently emphasizes emotions of camaraderie and joy in its holiday advertising, forging a strong emotional bond with consumers.

As stated by Chakravarty (2023), marketers take use of this theory by challenging clients' preconceptions in their advertising, thereby causing a state of cognitive dissonance. Companies trick customers into rationalizing their purchasing choices by positioning a brand as the answer to a problem or as a status symbol. By focusing on workmanship and exclusive access, high-end apparel companies use this strategy to appeal to their customers' drive for self-improvement. According to the priming theory, exposure to particular stimuli might affect future attitudes and behaviors (Melović *et al.* 2020). Through subconscious messaging, advertisers use priming to subtly ingrain memories in consumers' thoughts. Brands manipulate perceptions by evoking particular emotions or memories through color schemes, musical instruments or imagery. For instance, fast-food companies frequently use the colors red and yellow in their branding to imply hunger and hurry (Braxton & Lau-Gesk, 2020).

Methodology

Based on an online survey of 80 customers who made purchases both online and in stores, the study comprises a proper primary data collection procedure. Five-point Likert scale optioning was used for the survey, which was carried out using Google Forms. The responses were then imported into IBM SPSS for quantitative analysis. In order to concentrate on the relationship of branding manipulation techniques giving influence on consumers' purchasing decisions and marketing strategies, analysis such as descriptive, regression, T-Test, and sig value has been found and analyzed. Individuals who are working in marketing departments of any company are included, and non-marketers are excluded, according to inclusion and exclusion criteria. The strict data confidentiality of all participant demographic and personal information has allowed ethics to be upheld.

Data findings and analysis

Descriptive analysis

2. What is your age?				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	5	6.3	6.3	6.3
Valid 10 to 20	15	18.8	18.8	25.0
20 to 35	18	22.5	22.5	47.5
35 to 50	32	40.0	40.0	87.5
Above 50	10	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Table 1: Age

(Source: Created by learner)

As per the above analysis it is seen that most of the participants are under age 35 and fewer than 50. These young participants have a strong influence of daily branding techniques implied on customers. The percentage of these age groups is respectively 22.5% and 40.0%. On the other hand considering the people or the participants above 50 years these are marketing and brand managers who imply the techniques in the market. The young specialists and associates keep a close eye on online businesses and the marketing they run that highlight client testimonials and family and friend referrals (Shankar & Yadav, 2021).

1. What is your Gender?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	5	6.3	6.3	6.3
		34	42.5	42.5	48.8
	Male	26	32.5	32.5	81.3
	Prefer not to say	15	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Gender

(Source: Created by learner)

According to the gender frequency analysis in the table, it is seen that most of the participants are male as compared to females. Most of the male participants are under the age of 25 and these are associates and marketing specialists who have proper knowledge of marketing techniques. The balanced percentage of these two genders is 32.5% and 42.5%.

3. Years of experience					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 to 5	5	6.3	6.3	6.3
		14	17.5	17.5	23.8
	5 to 10	37	46.3	46.3	70.0
	Above 10	14	17.5	17.5	87.5
	No experience	10	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Years of experience

(Source: Created by learner)

As per the above analysis, it is seen that most of the participants belong to marketing specialists and administrators as they operate the customer collaboration techniques on a daily basis. Digital marketers are more in number which is ___ as these people focus on daily activities with market specialists. However, because they are well-versed in technological advances, these individuals are more forthcoming about the brands and categories of things they buy online. The participants above are either marketing or brand managers due to their relevant experience in daily marketing on behalf of the company (Singh, Crisafulli, & Xue, 2020).

Regression analysis

Null hypothesis: There is no direct significant relationship of branding manipulation techniques in influencing marketing strategies for a company

Alternative hypothesis: There is no direct significant relationship of branding manipulation techniques in influencing marketing strategies for a company

Model Summary^a

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.289 ^a	.084	.071	.95276	.084	6.670	1	73	.012	2.374

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.055	1	6.055	6.670	.012 ^b
	Residual	66.265	73	.908		
	Total	72.320	74			

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.766	.953		11.291	.000
	IV1	-.206	.080	-.289	-2.583	.012

Table 4: Regression analysis

(Source: Created by learner)

According to the results of the over regression analysis, the R value for the study is .289, which is close to the value of 1, and it shows that branding manipulation strategies have a significant impact on consumer purchasing behavior. Other than that, the sig esteem showed 0.000, which is less than 0.005, and it suggests that branding strategies have a proper relationship with the influence on customers' purchasing decisions and the development of marketing strategy. The F value, which is greater than the p value of 0.05 and looks to have a strong association with the theory, is finally seen to be 6.670. As a result, the alternative theory is acknowledged as a possibility inside the research, and the null hypothesis is disproved.

Summary

The study analyzes how product manipulation strategies are picked up and adopted into organizational practices, delving into the complex world of brand manipulation tactics used by marketing. It reveals different strategies used by marketers to discreetly affect customers' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in order to increase customer commitment and boost sales. The study emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend these strategies in order to encourage moral marketing practices and help consumers make informed decisions.

Future scope

This study offers the groundwork for a number of prospective future research directions. It might start by delving more deeply into the moral ramifications of brand exploitation and talking about how to reconcile successful advertising with empowering consumers. Second, research into the psychological and cognitive bases for these deception methods may shed light on how different people react to various tactics. A study of the evolving nature of digital marketing and how it affects brand manipulating strategies may also shed light on the constantly changing character of consumer-brand interaction (Lee, 2021). Finally, the study might be extended to examine counter strategies that consumers can use against undue influence from brands and make more informed decisions, promoting a more open and fair market.

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