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THE ROLE OF STORYTELLING IN BUILDING A BRAND

WYKORZYSTANIE STORYTELLINGU W PROCESIE BUDOWANIA MARKI

Abstract: Nowadays, storytelling is a well-known tool used in process of building a brand. Despite of popularity of corporates' stories, the elements a good brand story and condition under which story creates a value of a brand remains unclear. The present article is aimed to give an outlook on the role of storytelling in building a brand and how to design a good brand story. This paper is based on literature review. The analysis of polish and foreign surveys reveal that brand story rises positive emotions, unique association and better assess-

ment to a brand. Researchers listed various elements that comprised a good brand story, e. g. authenticity, benefits, first-person narrator, sense of humor. Storytelling gives opportunity to product differentiation and makes consumers less sensitive for a price.

Keywords: storytelling, brand story, brand building

Streszczenie: Obecnie storytelling jest powszechnym narzędziem wykorzystywanym w procesie budowania marki. Pomimo popularności historii firmowych elementy dobrze napisanej historii oraz warunki, w których ta historia kreuje wartość marki, pozostają niejasne. Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu przedstawienie roli storytellingu w procesie kreowania marki oraz sposobu projektowania użytecznej historii. Artykuł został napisany w oparciu o przegląd literatury. Analiza dostępnych polskich i zagranicznych badań pokazała, że historia marki wywołuje pozytywne emocje, wyjątkowe skojarzenia oraz lepszą ocenę marki. Naukowcy wymieniają rozmaite elementy, z których składa się skuteczna historia, takie jak: autentyczność, korzyści, pierwszoosobowa narracja, poczucie humoru. Storytelling stwarza możliwość różnicowania produktu i czyni konsumentów mniej wrażliwymi na cenę.

Słowa kluczowe: storytelling, historia marki, budowanie marki

Introduction

The growing ranks of companies have realized the value of stories and decided to use them in marketing¹. Traditional approach to management mitigates the role of narratives and persuasion in marketing research and practice. Narratives and storytelling were treated unscientific and a little attention was given to them until the last decade when influence of storytelling in marketing increased and gained legitimacy². Marketing managers have started to utilize the stories to communicate with customers and build emotional connections between customers, brands and products. Researchers were focused on explaining customers' reactions to advertisements and buying experiences. They assume that storytelling can connect the physical products and consumers' feelings and emotions. Brand story also could give to the product the social meanings and symbols not only practical functions³. Well-told brand story can make the brand more attractive to consumers⁴.

Contemporary organizations develop variety of methods to build a strong brand as a part of its business strategy. Brand is often evaluated as a company's most

¹ A. Lundqvist, V. Liljander, J. Gummerus, A. Van Riel, *The impact of storytelling on the consumer brand experience: The case of a firm-originated story*, "Journal of Brand Management" 2013, 20(4), p. 285.

² O. Iglesias, E. Bonet, *Persuasive brand management: How managers can influence brand meaning when they are losing control over it*, "Journal of Organizational Change Management" 2012, 25(2), p. 257.

³ W.Y. Huang, *Brand story and perceived brand image: Evidence from Taiwan*, "Journal of Family and Economic Issues" 2010, 31(3), p. 307-308.

⁴ A. Lundqvist, V. Liljander, J. Gummerus, A. Van Riel, *The impact of...*, p. 284.

valuable asset⁵. The customer who is loyal to the brand may be willing to pay more for the product with brand's logotype because they perceive some unique value. The uniqueness may be caused by grater trust in the reliability of a brand or from more favorable affect when customers use a brand⁶.

Brand building activities like storytelling are positively correlated with brand equity and lead to acquiring and retaining customers and increases value for company. Brand equity is important in building long lasting relationship with customer⁷. Brand equity is a set of brand assets and liabilities lined to a brand, its name and symbol, that add or subtract a from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customer.

Storytelling creates positive feelings in customers and leads to higher brand trust, raising awareness and making the brand special⁸. Brand affect and brand trust is positively related to brand commitment⁹. Commitment is defined as customers' confidence that the functional and affective benefits from maintaining relationship with partners are greater than the benefits from ending them. Commitment is described as a core feature of customer relationship management and inevitable factor in achieving company's goals. Customer committed to a brand is motivated to active cooperation and is also difficult to attract to competitors¹⁰.

The present paper is aimed to give an outlook on companies' brand stories and their role in building a brand. This article is based on literature review and is structured as follows. The first part of this analysis will be focused on the issue of storytelling and especially what the storytelling is. Second part represents a contemporary directions of research and is based on literature review. This part is supplemented with scholars' suggestions of further research in the field of storytelling. Third part constitutes final conclusions.

1. The concept of Storytelling

Many well-known companies are using brand stories in communication with customers¹¹. Stories are defined as a type of narrative information and are commonly used elements in people's life which help them to understand their life experienc-

⁵ A. Wallström, T. Karlsson, E. Salehi-Sangari, *Building a corporate brand: The internal brand building process in Swedish service firms*, "Journal of Brand Management" 2008, 16(1-2), p. 40.

⁶ A. Chaudhuri, M.B. Holbrook, *The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: the role of brand loyalty*, "Journal of Marketing" 2001, 65(2), p. 81.

⁷ S. Samu, P. Krishnan Lyndem, R.A. Litz *Impact of brand-building activities and retailer-based brand equity on retailer brand communities*, "European Journal of Marketing" 2012, 46(11/12), p. 1585-1586.

⁸ A. Lundqvist, V. Liljander, J. Gummerus, A. Van Riel, *The impact of...*, p. 286.

⁹ A. Chaudhuri, M. B. Holbrook, *The chain of effects...*, p. 54.

¹⁰ W. M. Hur, K. H. Ahn, M. Kim, *Building brand loyalty through managing brand community commitment*, *Management Decision* 2011, 49(7), p. 1197.

¹¹ W.Y. Huang, *Brand story...*, p. 317.

es and surrounding things in narrative way. Marketers widely use stories' creation with a brand to communicate and build relationship with their customers because stories let audiences to use their imagination. Lin C. H. and Chen M. Y. defined a brand story as a mean of communicating the meanings of products and brands to customers. Brand story contain information's about the origination, innovation, development, benefits, values and visions¹². Stories paint a pictures in customers' minds and make them concentrated on the message. Marketers can use a storytelling as a mean of communication to convey information about brands or products¹³. Stories can be proliferated through press releases, websites, intranets, speeches, the annual report, management decisions¹⁴.

There is no story without several factors like chronological sequence, central characters, imaginary and lesson learned¹⁵. Brand stories are similar to traditional fairy tales. They have a beginning, middle and end. The events have a chronological sequence. Stories often represent a valuable point for audience and include a message, a conflict, a role distribution and action. It can convey only one single message. The story typically contains an unexpected or unusual twist and the end is often best remembered. Brand stories need to be evaluated as credible by the audience to be successful the goal of the story is to put the brand in a positive light¹⁶. Understanding the elements of story and how this elements influence on customers can help marketers design a relevant narratives and enhance customers' confidence¹⁷.

2. Brand stories in the light of a research

Lundqvist A., Liljander V., Gummerus J., Van Riel A. carried out a research oriented on effectiveness of storytelling. In research they used an international cosmetics brand. In cosmetics brand the storytelling is often used and told vendors and customers. The authors expected that the research could provide in-depth information which can be useful for theory-building purposes. In this study 20 participants between 25 and 40 years old of age were involved. Neither one of them had any knowledge of the company or a brand before. Individual interviews were conducted with every participants. Half of the group members were asked to read the story about the company brand and values. It was a real firm story that reveals how the firm was established and developed into a large company. Thereafter, they

¹² C.H. Lin, M.Y. Chen, "Being hooked" by a brand story: a view of regulatory focus, "European Journal of Marketing" 2015, 49(5/6), 692-693.

¹³ H.C. Chiu, Y.C. Hsieh, Y.C. Kuo, *How to align your brand stories with your products*, "Journal of Retailing" 2012, 88(2), p. 264.

¹⁴ S. Spear, S. Roper, *Using corporate stories to build the corporate brand: an impression management perspective*, "Journal of Product & Brand Management" 2013, 22(7), p. 492.

¹⁵ H.C. Chiu, Y.C. Hsieh, Y.C. Kuo, *How to align...*, p. 264.

¹⁶ A. Lundqvist, V. Liljander, J. Gummerus, A. Van Riel, *The impact of...*, p. 285.

¹⁷ H.C. Chiu, Y.C. Hsieh, Y.C. Kuo, *How to align...*, p. 264.

saw a slide show of a shop where the products were sold. Participants also heard the story of one of the cosmetics product, which they were asked to guess the price during the interviews. The other half of group members were not told any stories and does not saw any slide show. Each participant was asked to test a selection of 15 products of the brand and to express their feelings and opinions.

The group that did not know the firm story expressed only negative opinions about the packaging style. They described the brand as cheap and old fashioned. The large amount of text they found irritating. The brand was perceived as a brand from grocery stores or retail brand. Participants that was read the firm story represented much more positive associations with the brand. The packaging was perceived as simple elegance and products as attractive.

In the next part, the participants were asked to describe the brand. The group which had not been uncovered the firm story listed following adjectives to describe the brand: clean, ordinary, ecological, high quality. Some interviewees described the brand as: old fashioned, informative, cheap, inconsistent. Participants who heard the story chose adjectives like: friendly/sympathetic/warm, traditional, high quality, natural, interesting, trendy, valuable, elegant.

Participants also were asked to rate the price of a presented facial cream. According to result, respondents who did not know the firm story estimated the price to be between 10 € and 30 €. Vast majority indicated the lower price range of 10 € - 20 €. Only half of respondents were willing to pay the real price that is 31 € for this product. Among the group which heard the story, the price range was broader, from 10 € to more than 50 €. All respondents were willing to pay for this facial cream real price.

The study provides the evidences that well created firm story can rise positive feelings toward the brand and consequently increase customers' willingness to pay. Consumers in two groups perceived the brand in different way and developed different approaches¹⁸.

Van Riel and Fombrun suggested that a good corporate story should include the activities that enhance company's reputation. They identified four reputation platform themes, which are the starting point for developing corporate stories: activities, benefits, emotions and strategy. The activities theme convey information about company's key activity, abilities, competences and accomplishments. The benefits theme are geared toward stakeholders and express the attractive outcomes or benefits from organization's activities. The emotional theme is proposed to attract customers and keep employees motivated. The story should create an emotional bond with stakeholders, employees and customers. The role of strategy theme in firm story is to articulate the organization's strategy. The strategy theme should include the company's vision, mission and values. Themes and elements of corporate stories are presented in table 1.

¹⁸ A. Lundqvist, V. Liljander, J. Gummerus, A. Van Riel A, *The impact of...*, p. 287-291.

Table 1. Themes and elements of corporate stories

Tabela 1. Motywy i elementy firmowych historii

Story theme	Story element
Activities	Activities
	Accomplishments
Benefits	Internal and external benefits
Emotional	Emotion
	Conflict
Strategy	Vision
	Mission
	Values

Source: own elaboration based on: S. Spear, S. Roper, *Using corporate stories to build the corporate brand: an impression management perspective*, "Journal of Product & Brand Management" 2013, 22(7), p. 493.

Spear S. and Roper S. carried out a research which are focused on the corporate stories presented on companies' official websites. In the analysis, 99 organizations and their firm stories were included, in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. The authors identified differences between the two populations. The stories included a various elements and some companies placed greater importance on some elements in their firm stories than others.

The accomplishments element, part of the activities theme, was identified in 85,1% of for-profit companies and 75% of non-for-profit organizations. This result shows that organizations in both groups appreciate promoting their successes in firm stories. The activities element was not prevalent like the accomplishment element. The activities is also a part of the activities theme like accomplishment. The authors identified it in 36,2% for-profit company stories and 51,9% of charities stories. The activities include information about company's strategy for example in the PSPCA story is used the statement: "we are working with China to develop its first animal welfare law". The activities theme relate to facts and communications.

Literature suggests that emotional theme is more important in building a brand. The emotional theme includes the conflict and emotion elements and is used less often than accomplishments. For-profit companies used emotion in only 23,4% the conflict whereas charity companies noted 61,5%. The similar situation was observed in terms of conflict element. The base of this element is evidence of supplication behavior (likewise apologies, excuses, justifications). The conflict was used in 44,7% of for-profit companies and 51,9% in charity companies. The conflict is used in companies which operate in controversial industries like banking, e. g. Royal Bank of Scotland firm story contains the statement: "we have recently entered and excep-

tionally difficult period of our history... some of our major strategic decisions were subsequently shown to be bad mistakes”.

The benefits theme comprises the internal and external benefits. The external benefits were identified in 75% charity stories and surprisingly only in 40,4% of for-profit company stories. The story should communicate the stakeholders what profit can be expected from company in terms of product, services and customer experiences. For charities should be important communication's benefits and benefit for society or groups in need. The internal benefits are noticed only in 10,6% for-profit company stories and 9,6% in the charity stories. Organizations has the opportunity to promote the benefits using the company stories.

The strategy theme comprises vision, mission, values and is neglected in most firm stories. The value element can be find only in 21,3% of for-profit company stories and 5,8% of non-for-profit companies. The story is crucial in transmitting values and enhancing corporate brand. The same situation was observed in terms of vision and mission elements. Vision and mission communicate the company's broader purpose and aims. Only 8,5% of for-profit companies included vision and 4,3% mission in firm story. In charity companies the authors noted 1,9% of organizations with vision and 11,5% with mission. The result shows that despite of importance of strategy elements, emphasized in literature, organizations are not using strategy elements in firm stories very often.

This study has identified themes and elements of firms stories to explain the impact of this stories on the brand. The companies more often used the accomplishment element in the stories rather than the benefits, emotions and strategy themes. There are differences in creating a story in for-profit companies and not-for-profit organizations. The charity companies are sometimes more effective¹⁹.

Granitz N., Forman H. investigated the types of brand stories that consumers know. The authors used qualitative research and employed long semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. The sample of this pilot study was 54 and consumers in this sample were between the ages of 19 and 32. Respondents were asked about the brands which they had a high and low connection and what stories they knew about the brands. They were also asked about the source of information about the stories. After that, respondents were asked about the brands in which stories they would like to hear and about the media where they would like to hear the information's. The authors collected the data until saturation point was achieved.

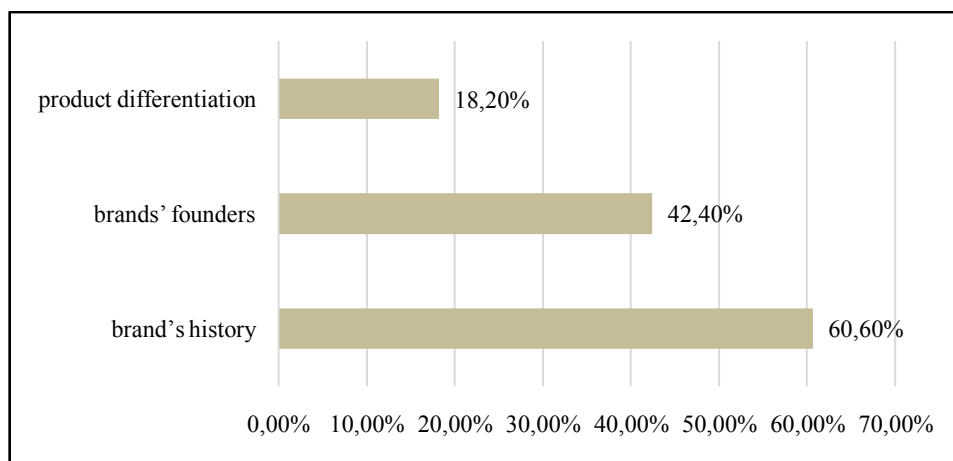
The results show that there are two types of stories that consumers know. The first type the authors called organizational brand stories. Consumer were asked about their knowledge of any stories associated with the brand. More than half (70%) of consumers admitted that they are connected with the brand and 60,6%

¹⁹ S. Spear, S. Roper, *Using corporate stories to...*, p. 492, 496-498.

told stories about brand's history. This story told how the brand was created and how developed into contemporary brand. Another stories which 42,4% respondents connected with the brand related to the brands' founders. Founders created the companies from nothing to the highest valued worldwide brand. Moreover, 18,2% of stories focused on how the brand was different from others. The results presents figure 1. Only 30% of respondents answered that they never heard any story about brands. To sum up, organizational brand stories contain brand's history, brand's founders and product differentiation.

Figure 1. Types of organizational brand stories

Rysunek 1. Rodzaje organizacyjnych historii marek



Source: Based on N. Granitz & H. Forman, *Building self-brand connections: Exploring brand stories through a transmedia perspective*, "Journal of Brand Management" 2015, 22(1), p. 47.

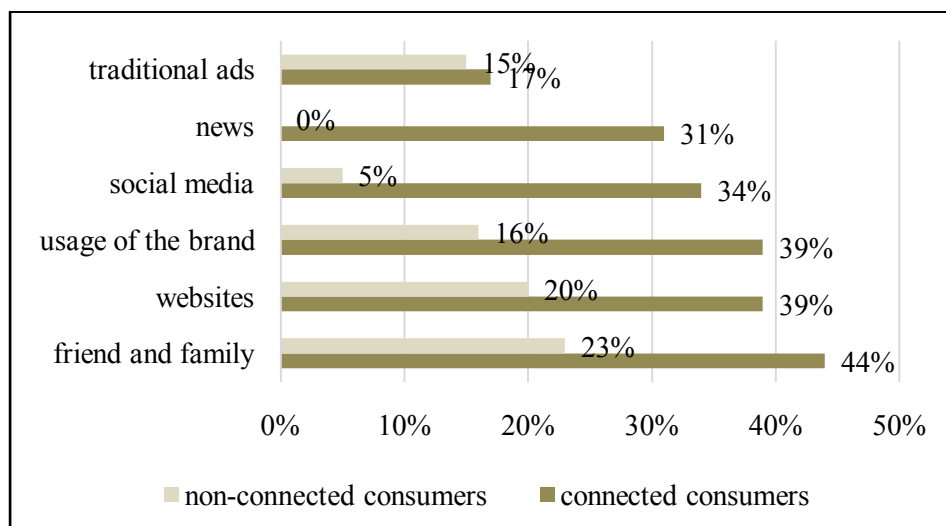
The second type of stories the authors called personal experienced stories. Among respondents connected to the brand, 30,3% admitted that they had personal stories related to some brands. Most of that stories told about respondents' relationship to the brand or about product reliability. Consumers told the stories about how the product or service worked for them. There are also mentioned remaining stories related to family or friends' personal experiences with the brand. Accurately 90% of the consumers who did not have a connection to brands also admitted that they did not have any personal story related to the brands. To sum up, experience stories are stories mainly related to experiences with product from consumers or their family and friends.

In terms of consumers connected with brands, 44% of them indicated that they heard their stories from friend and family, 39% from websites, 39% is based on their own brand usage, 34% from social media, 31% from news and 17% from traditional ads. Amongst non-connected consumers, 23% learned the stories from friends and

family, 20% from the brand websites, 15% from traditional ads, 16% from usage of the brand, 5% from social media. The results presents figure 2.

Figure 2. Sources of brand stories

Rysunek 2. Źródła historii marek



Source: Based on N. Granitz, & H. Forman, *Building self-brand connections: Exploring brand stories through a transmedia perspective*, "Journal of Brand Management" 2015, 22(1), p. 48.

Respondents connected to their brand indicated that they would like to hear the following types of stories: brand/producer's commitment to giving back (36,4%), history (30,3%), stories from other consumers' experiences with products (30,3%). Respondents not connected to the brand also wanted to hear stories about: giving back (30%) and product reliability (30%). The results of survey indicates that 61% of consumers connected to their brands expect to learn of stories from companies' websites, 56% from social media and 56% from news media. Amongst consumers who did not have a connection to brands, 68,7% wanted to learn the stories from traditional marketing channels like commercials.

From the point of view of practitioners, it is important that consumers would like to hear some kind of stories. Respondents listed following types of stories: history, product, reliability, differentiation, company founders and consumers' personal stories about the brands. Marketers have an opportunity to reach the consumers. They need to take into consideration that the special communication channel and narrative must arouse emotions, present a memorable plot and build connection with the audience on a deeper emotional level²⁰.

²⁰ N. Granitz, H. Forman, *Building self-brand connections: Exploring brand stories through a transmedia perspective*, "Journal of Brand Management" 2015, 22(1), p. 44-45, 48-49, 52.

Chiu H.C., Hsieh Y.C., Kuo Y.C. highlighted four elements that comprised a good brand story, namely: authenticity, conciseness, reversal and humor.

Authenticity is some visualization of the action which gives readers feeling of reality and makes the story credible. Modern marketing creates tension between authenticity and inauthenticity for consumers and importance of this factor increases. To meet readers' expectation, the story should contain varied facts which increase feeling of reality in customers eyes. This facts can be for example: name of inventor, his education or job, time, number of experiments with the product.

Conciseness is when the story excludes unnecessary words, phrases, details and manipulating syntactic structures and still contains important points adequately. Communication with customers need to be concise because people have no time and are not patient to stay focused for long period of time on extensive narrative. Using concise narrative help remember the key concept. Consumers are not distracted by unnecessary details.

Reversal is a turning points of story when the action or/and the emotions takes an unexpected twist. In story unexpected twist is always when interactions among the product, characters and the situation are happened. Consumers can observe the best way to resolve the problems or obstacles thereby advertising help consumers understand product benefits.

Humor is also important part of stories. Stories created with sense of humor are useful in education, leadership and employee training. Humor is frequently utilized in advertising strategy because increases brand liking and expedites transfer of positive affect for the product. Using humor also increases consumers' attention and comprehension of message.

Chiu H.C., Hsieh Y.C., Kuo Y.C. carried out a research based on aforementioned elements of brand story. This study explores relationship amongst brand story elements, brand attitudes and purchase intentions. First part of this study is focused on search products and second part on experience products. Consumers can evaluate search products before purchase. Experience products can be evaluated usually after purchase. The authors selected two types of search products: English-language magazine and fashion clothing. Two types of experience products were also selected: casual dining restaurants and financial investment services. The pilot study was performed before the main study was started. In pilot study 70 graduate students were included to help confirm the categorization of search and experience products. Participants evaluated their ability to judge the product before purchase using seven-point scale. In the first part of main study (search products) involved graduate and undergraduate students. Each participants read the brand story and after that they filled out the questionnaire. The authors obtained 773 completed questionnaires. In the second part of study the authors obtained 763 completed questionnaires.

The results offer some key strategic directives for companies to enhance their customers' brand attitudes and purchase intentions for search and experience products.

The brand stories have an important input to brand-building process. A well-created story impact on building product knowledge and positive emotions in order to highlight product differences and reduce consumers' price sensitivities. Retailers can make products more valuable and mitigate the need for price promotions. A good brand story can enhance customer understanding of retailer offerings and activate positive emotions. Brand story and this positive feelings may suggest a solution to customers' problems and goals and arouse positive brand attitude and purchase intention. The survey indicates that storytelling is effective in portraying and conveying the value of experience products. Positive effect was identified for search and experience products, through across product types and brand story elements. To design an effective brand story, companies should use four element: authenticity, conciseness, reversal and humor. These elements create positive correlation with brand attitude and purchase intention. Firstly, authenticity improves customers' brand attitude more for experience products than for search products. An authentic brand story can communicate the value of experienced products. An inauthentic story can decrease effectiveness of message. Secondly, conciseness impacts on customers' brand attitude only for search products. In terms of experience products consumers are unable to judge products before purchase. Lack of knowledge and detailed information's cause higher perceived risk for consumers. It can be concluded that a longer brand story is essential for experienced product. In addition, the impact of reversal on brand attitude is grater for experience products than for search products. Using a reversal element is helping in presentation product's ability to solving a problems. In this case, there is a sufficient amount of information's to evaluate product before usage. Reversal can also arise grater positive emotional response what is important because consumers' judgements of products are highly subjective. Finally, using a humor is more effective for search products than experience products. Search product consumers are low involved in story but more often there are attracted by the humor²¹.

Huang W.Y. indicates three important components of good brand story and their influence on perceived brand image. Huang W.Y. listed following components: the authenticity, plot and narrator of story. He examined the impact of brand stories' components on consumers' perceived brand image. In survey, he manipulated the degree of authenticity (high and low level), narrator (first-person and non-first-person narrator) and clarity of plot (clear and unclear plot). A brand story can be trustworthy and acknowledge as "a true story" when encompass some meaningful senses to people in real life. A story loses authenticity if does not accord with life experiences and behaviors and appears to distort or hide the truth. The storytellers and audiences are important part of designing a story because relationship between them impacts on the way how the stories are processed and impact on customer's

²¹ H.C. Chiu, Y.C. Hsieh, Y.C. Kuo, *How to align...*, p. 264-267, 270-273.

perception of the stories. Narrators play an important role because they have the possibility to decide how to tell the stories and what can be found in the stories' content. They also add authenticity to story by using sentences such as: "I witness it," "I heard of it" or "this is my personal experience". Plot is a central part of a story and attribute that organizes events in following sequence: beginning, middle and the end.

The author involved 79 students in the pre-test. Pre-test examined the effect of previous knowledge of existing brands and brand awareness. On the purpose of experiment a fictitious brands and their stories were created. Eight versions of the brand story with different narrator, degree of authenticity and clarity of plot was also created. In main test, respondents were randomly assigned into each of eight experimental groups with eight versions of story. The author acquainted respondents with the stories and requested them to complete the questionnaire. Respondents evaluated perceived brand image paying special attention to functional, experiential and symbolic. Huang W. Y. collected 211 valid questionnaires.

The results shows that the brand story perceived as high authenticity generates a significantly more positive image than the story with low perceived authenticity. Additionally, greater perceived brand image was identified in the group with the first-person narrator than in the group with non-first-person narrator. The brand story with the clear plot elicited more positive brand image than story with unclear plot. Very interesting is fact that stories with low authenticity, unclear plot and non-first-person narrator can still generate certain level of brand image. It can be summarized that every company can create a brand story easily but better design story with aforementioned components could exert greater influence on positive brand image.

According to research, the authenticity of brand story can help customers make sense of the brand. When customers perceived the story as highly authentic, they had more positive experiential feelings toward the brand evaluated the brand more reliable and better quality. Perfect example demonstrate brand story of Timex, based on long brand's history. The story suggest the existence of a brand spirit which would enhance customers' perceived authenticity and reliability of the brand. Results shows that brand story told by a first-person-narrator elicit more positive brand image in comparison to the story with non-first-person narrator. A brand story with a first-person-narrator stimulate consumers' sympathy and is perceived as more sincere and truthful. It also can help in building strong brand association and positive brand image. Research also indicate that clear and well design plot in a brand story can include more positive brand image than story with unclear plot. A clear plot can help customers better understand the information or meanings conveyed in the story. The well-created story should have clear sequence including beginning, middle and the end. Regardless what message a brand need to convey, it should be expressed in a clear plot²².

²² W.Y. Huang, *Brand story...*, p. 310- 314.

Despite of research presented in literature review some scholars identified a necessity of further research in the field of storytelling. Spear S. and Roper S. stated that future research should investigate what extent corporate stories illustrate the reality of the organizations. Future research should also evaluate the firm stories in comparison to unofficial stories within the organizations and consider the corporate stories from the point of view of organization members²³. Chiu H. C., Hsieh Y. C., Kuo Y. C. indicated that future research should explore how price moderates the effect of brand elements (authenticity, conciseness, reversal, humor) on brand attitude and purchase intention. Additional research can investigate gender-based differences in decision making behavior and evaluations²⁴. According to Huang W. Y. future research should examine the impact of brand stories on consumers' perceptions towards various product or service categories²⁵.

Conclusion

Brand stories and storytelling play an important role in building a brand. In studies can be find various types of stories. Respondents connected to the brand listed organizational brand stories contained: brand's history, brand's founders and product differentiation. They also noticed personal stories mainly related to experiences with product from consumers' or their family and friends.

Some companies placed greater importance on some elements in their firm stories than others. The information about activities are appreciate by companies especially in terms of promoting their successes. The strategy with vision, mission and values is neglected in most common firm stories. Organizations often use the opportunity to promote the benefits in company stories. Frequently, emotional element is important part of stories. The companies more often used the accomplishment element in the stories rather than the benefits, emotions and strategy themes.

Another mentioned elements that comprised a good brand story are: authenticity, conciseness, reversal, humor and additionally plot and narrator of story.

According to research advertisement with story content rises positive emotions and unique association to a brand. A story also creates expectation towards the brand²⁶. Participants that was read the firm story indicated more positive associations with the brand, better assessment and they were willing to pay for product more. Consumers that heard the story and customers that nor heard characterized by different approaches to the brand.

²³ S. Spear, S. Roper, *Using corporate stories to...*, p. 499.

²⁴ H.C. Chiu, Y.C. Hsieh, Y.C. Kuo, *How to align...*, p. 273.

²⁵ W.Y. Huang, *Brand story...*, p. 314.

²⁶ A. Lundqvist, V. Liljander, J. Gummerus, A. Van Riel, *The impact of...*, p. 286.

There is no doubt that the brand stories have an important input to brand-building process. A well-created story exerts influence on building product knowledge and rises positive emotions, consequently highlight product differences and reduce consumers' price sensitivities.

Firm-originated story are powerful tool in branding but very little empirical evidence exist of their effects on consumer responses²⁷. There is a recognition of necessity of further research in the field of storytelling.

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