Guest Editorial

Commentary: Identity, Identification and the Management of Change

Corporate Reputation Review (2012) 15, 141–142. doi:10.1057/crr.2012.12

The discovery of identities is undeniably the basis of scientific enquiry and it is, also, indubitably the case that advances in management, marketing, and communications are meaningfully informed by scrutinising institutions via identity-based perspectives (Balmer, 2008). Identity and identification are key means by which we can comprehend contemporary organisations; and as such, they can shed light on management issues and help to discern employee, customer and stakeholder's associations with institutions.

This special edition reflects the importance of identity and identifications in their various expressions such as organisational identity, corporate identity, corporate brand identity, social identity – among other identity perspectives – too. It also allows for identity perspectives that exist in the realm of corporate communications (eg, communicated identity), branding (eg, visionary identity) and strategy (eg, ideal identity). Especially, it includes papers exploring these issues of identity *vis-a-vis* the management of change.

The four articles that are included in this special edition were presented at the 14th International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) Symposium at one of Spain's foremost centres of management and communication research: IE University (the symposium was held at the University's heritage campus in Segovia). The ICIG symposium was funded by John Balmer in 1994 with the aim to keeping identity in the

forefront of scholarly and practitioner deliberations. In its 14th edition the Symposium had the theme: *Identity, Identification and the Management of Change*.

The four articles, variously informed by reviews of the literature along with empirical case studies and include contributions from Australia, Continental Europe as well as from North America. The first article (Rouzies and Colman) is an empirical study of the role of social interaction in creating employee identification with a new entity after a corporate acquisition/merger. The second paper (Stuart), focuses on how employees 'live the corporate brand' after a company brand has been refashioned. Stuart offers a theoretical framework relating to the aforementioned. The third article (Kernstock and Brexendorf) reports the insights from an action research study examining the integration of multiple brands after merger and acquisition activity. The final article (Carroll) details a measurement audit methodology for identifying multiple and hybrid identities for values-based organisations who strive to align their multiple identities.

Finally, we wish to thank the team of reviewers who provided feedback to the authors in a most expeditious manner. We are also most grateful to the Editors in Chief of *CRR* – Charles J. Fombrun and Cees B.M. van Riel – for their support, encouragement and for their conviviality.

We are confident that this special edition will meaningfully inform and advance our knowledge of the identity territory. Moreover,

Corporate Reputation Review,
Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 141–142
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1363-3589

we hope that it will shed light on issues of corporate identity, identification and the management of change. *Read on and enjoy!*

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REFERENCE

Balmer, J.M.T. (2008) 'Identity based views of the corporation: Insights from corporate identity, organisational identity, social identity, visual identity and corporate image', *European Journal of Marketing*, 42(9–10), 879–906.