Review Article

Journal of Brand Management – Year end review 2016

Shaun M. Powell

is Co-Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Brand Management* and a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Business at the University of Wollongong in Australia. His research on Corporate Brand Management and Corporate Communication has appeared in a range of journals such as the European Journal of Marketing, Journal of Business Ethics, Journal of Consumer Marketing, and Corporate Communications: An International Journal.

ABSTRACT   **A review and reflection on key topics plus extrapolation of future research avenues from within the *Journal of Brand Management* during 2016 that included a special issue focused on the themes of (i) Corporate identity, branding, marketing, communication, and reputation. Seven additional themes within the Volume are identified: (ii) Brand engagement, (iii) Brand orientation, (iv) Brand counterfeiting and protection, (v) Online and digital branding, (vi) Brand and product naming, (vii) City branding, and (viii) branding in Higher Education.**
Journal of Brand Management (2016) **23,** 601–611. doi:10.1057/s41262-016-0021-5

INTRODUCTION

At the conclusion of Volume 22 (2015), the *Journal of Brand Management* (JBM) published an end-of-year review reflecting on the Volumes research (Powell, 2015). As Volume 23 draws to a close it offers a similar opportunity. The Volume included a thought-provoking special issue (SI) linked to the 17th International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) Symposium held in South Africa. Other themes in the Volume include Brand engagement, Brand orientation, Brand counterfeiting and protection, Online and digital branding, Brand and product naming, City branding, and branding in Higher Education.

The remainder of this review synthesises and summarises the themes above plus extrapolates various avenues for future research in the domain of brand management. Additional insightful topics published throughout the year are outlined in Table 1.

SPECIAL ISSUE ON CORPORATE IDENTITY, BRANDING, MARKETING, COMMUNICATION, AND REPUTATION

Volume 23 was launched with a stimulating special issue (SI) linked to the 17th International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) Symposium held at the Graduate School of

Correspondence:
Shaun M. Powell, School of Management, Operations and Marketing, Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong, Northfields Ave, Wollongong, NSW 2522, Australia.
E-mail: spowell@uow.edu.au

Table 1: Additional original articles published within JBM Volume 23 (2016)

Positive affectivity as a predictor of consumers' propensity to be brand loyal (Pulligadda et al, 2016)	A consumer-perceived consumer-based brand equity scale (Baalbaki and Guzmán, 2016)	The impact of age on consumer attachment to celebrities and endorsed brand attachment (Ilicic et al, 2016)	Finding fit: An exploratory look at SME brand orientation and brand management in the New Zealand food beverage sector (Renton et al, 2016)
The internal branding process and financial performance in service companies: an examination of the required steps (Tuominen et al, 2016)	Country-of-origin fit: when does a discrepancy between brand origin and country of manufacture reduce consumers' product evaluations? (Johnson et al, 2016)	Marketing store brands and manufacturer brands: role of referent and expert power in merchandising decisions (Chimhundu, 2016)	Cross-category indulgence: why do some premium brands grow during recession? (Mark et al, 2016)
A lovable personality: the effect of brand personality on brand love (Roy et al, 2016)	Certification and authentication of brand value propositions (Starr and Brodie, 2016)	Getting what you're worth: implications that affect firm value in a brand acquisition (Budeva et al, 2016)	The sweet taste of consistency in brand name sound & product/label shapes: investigating appetitive responses in a dessert context and obstacles that suppress (Spears et al, 2016)
Brand prominence in luxury consumption: will emotional value adjudicate our longing for status? (Butcher et al, 2016)	Brand trust and avoidance following brand crisis: a quasi-experiment on the effect of franchisor statements (Shin et al, 2016)	Consumer perceptions of co-branding alliances: organisational dissimilarity signals and brand fit (Decker and Baade, 2016)	Toward a model of brand strategy adoption (Neuvonen, 2016)

Business, University of Cape Town in conjunction with the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of the Witwatersrand and the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. The event focused on the domains of corporate identity, branding, marketing, communication, and reputation.

The special issue opens with a consideration of corporate brand building and management for eight leading British business schools by Balmer and Wang (2016), uncovering six key dimensions: strategic management, stakeholder management, corporate communications, service, leadership, and commitment. Their research also calls for subsequent studies to focus on the precise activities of business school managers in relation to corporate brand building to better explicate the process.

The SI moves on to consider a case study undertaken by Flax et al (2016) on Woolworths (a large South African high-end

retailer) which has built its core values around sustainability, innovation, quality and style, value for money, and integrity. The study deepens our understanding of the effect of supplier relationships on a corporate brand, via the development of a conceptual framework for supporting supplier relationship strategy. It also insightfully reveals an important connection between a supplier's level of strategic inclusion by Woolworths, its level of alignment with Woolworths' ambition and aspirations, and the overall effect that this has on Woolworths' corporate brand.

The third SI topic by McCoy and Venter (2016) is based on another case study providing an account of how corporate branding unfolds in practice, this time in the Financial Sector, by examining the role of corporate brand as a catalyst for change during a corporate turnaround in a South African bank. The research identifies that successful corporate brand management depends on a clear master plan, leadership,

internal communication and alignment, external alignment, and successfully overcoming resistance to change.

The fourth SI topic by Morokane *et al* (2016) investigates internal marketing and employee engagement in driving employees' propensity to endorse their corporate brand, via a large South African retail and merchant bank. Their findings corroborate the importance of the human resources–branding interface within organisations including the following: assigning employees to roles and career paths that align with their interests and capabilities, and creating opportunities for employees to deepen emotional connections with both their work and their organisation to better enable employee engagement.

In the fifth SI topic, Santos *et al* (2016) undertake a case study of Ach. Brito, a celebrated Portuguese manufacturer of soaps and toiletries, to explicate the notion of heritage branding orientation—which they differentiate from corporate heritage orientation. Their findings illuminate a number of managerial implications for heritage including the following: it can be activated and articulated in different ways; it can serve the repositioning of product brand or/and corporate brands; the materiality of product brands can be valuable to articulate heritage; and it can be effectively articulated by small- to medium-sized enterprises. The authors also usefully outline six future research avenues in the area.

The concluding topic in the SI by Urde and Greyser (2016) uses the Nobel Prize in an in-depth field-based case study. Their findings lead to the development of a new framework, the corporate brand identity and reputation matrix (CBIRM) while providing insights into the dynamics between corporate brand identity and reputation management. It also suggests five managerial situations where the new framework provides guidance as an analytical tool: (i) it can be used to define a corporate brand platform, taking into account both identity and reputation; (ii) it can be

used for troubleshooting—the framework enables identifying 'matches or mismatches' between a corporate brand's reputation and its identity; (iii) it can be used to assess key reputational and identity issues in a crisis situation; (iv) it can be used to pinpoint the importance of the approach and mindset to brands; (v) and finally it can be used to discuss accountabilities and responsibilities within corporate brand management.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS PUBLISHED IN JBM DURING 2016

A number of other topics can be delineated within Volume 23 as discussed in the following sections. Along with the articles in Table 1, these emphasise the ongoing breadth and depth of original and insightful research published by the journal.

BRAND ENGAGEMENT

In the past, considerable attention has been placed on the differing forms of relationships between consumers and brands (Sprott *et al*, 2009). More recently, the concept of customer or consumer brand engagement (CBE) is an area of increased interest along with the development of some early conceptual models (see Hollebeek, 2011a, b; Gambetti *et al*, 2012; Hollebeek *et al*, 2014).

Within Volume 23 and building on this growing interest, Dwivedi *et al* (2016) undertake research to explore measures and drivers of consumer brand engagement behaviours, based on the Actual Brand Engagement framework as proposed by Keller (2013). The importance of consumer brand knowledge, category involvement, and corporate-level associations is discussed. From an academic perspective, a number of future research paths are also proposed, including the use of the model across a range of categories to seek generalisability, plus consideration of other moderating effects which may exist and further explain engagement behaviours in the field.

the area in the JBM, particularly from the consumer perspective relating to demand, purchase, and consumption of counterfeit goods and products (see Gistri *et al*, 2009; Hieke, 2010; Wiedmann *et al*, 2012; Francis *et al*, 2015).

Within Volume 23, Wilson and Sullivan (2016) investigate the area further and across various industries to help identify practices and challenges for measuring the extent of product counterfeiting, from brand owner perspectives. Findings indicate that companies are fairly consistent in employing multiple processes to identify counterfeits, but that there is also a need to more effectively map, understand, and cultivate constructive relationships within supply-chain relationships. Additionally, the impact of technology needs to be further considered and explored, both in how it supports the creation of counterfeit products, as well as how it may allow for counterfeit sales and promotion through various digital channels and techniques.

Brand protection is further considered in the Volume by Wilson *et al* (2016), with their findings outlining several common responses by organisations to product counterfeiting including the following: establishing a brand protection unit; use of targeted investigative actions, trademark registration with customs, seizures, and physical and virtual monitoring strategies; and use of multiple measures to assess prevalence and impact.

ONLINE AND DIGITAL BRANDING

The potential to allow and encourage customers or community members to engage in a relationship with a brand via digital channels and technologies is not a new phenomenon (see Moore and Andradi, 1996; Foster *et al*, 2011; Lim and Melewar, 2011; Yan, 2011; Wallace *et al*, 2012; Boyd *et al*, 2014; De Vries and Carlson, 2014). Yet, despite at least two decades of the World Wide Web and more than a decade of growth in the use of social media, building or managing a brand remains something of a vexing challenge in the digital realm as highlighted by Holt (2016), with many organisations struggling to find a branding model that fits well.

Digital branding and social media continue to attract the attention of researchers and practitioners within Volume 23. For example, in order to support social media marketing activities and online branding, Azar *et al* (2016) apply gratification theory to develop a new typology of consumers based on consumer motivations to interact with brands on Facebook. Their research unpacks five motivators with the potential to influence consumers' interactions: social influence, search for information, entertainment, trust, and reward. They also insightfully reveal four different groups of consumers: brand detached, brand profiteer, brand companions, and brand reliants. A number of specific recommendations are made, which, if followed by brand managers, should help lead to more effective targeting of each group of consumers — to better drive their brand engagement. Various avenues for future research are also delineated including the following: the need to explore application of the proposed typology to other social networking sites; need for longitudinal studies and use of more representative samples to aid generalisation of results; and use of cross-cultural studies to test their proposed consumer typology to identify cultural differences that may influence consumer–brand interactions.

Willis and Wang (2016) also consider proactive activities in an online brand community (Weight Watchers) to better understand the role consumer engagement plays in shaping brand meaning, along with the transference of brand meaning through computer-mediated content. Their findings lead to a number of important implications due to the discovery of three types of entities being involved in this meaning-making and transfer process, namely Weight Watchers

brand, Weight Watchers online community, and the social issue of weight loss. Future research possibilities include the use of quantitative analysis to compare and contrast a larger sample of online brand communities and measuring the strength of brand associations generated in online brand communities to better understand which association is stronger or more salient.

Kamboj and Rahman (2016) further examine participation in the context of social media-based brand communities. Based on prior literature on relationship marketing and social exchange theory, drivers and outcomes of user participation were identified and tested. The findings will help e-marketers in relation to the importance of participation behaviour for developing brand loyalty via online communities on social media. Future research could be conducted to consider additional cultural contexts, as well as longitudinally.

BRAND AND PRODUCT NAMING

In the previous Volume of the JBM (2015), research on brand naming and classification was prominent and included, for example, a comprehensive framework of brand name classification by Arora et al (2015), based on a review of the literature, as well as naming methods in use by practitioners. Brand as well as product naming comes to the fore again in Volume 23, firstly with Martínez (2016) undertaking a series of empirical studies that consider the use of the word 'great' when linked to product names under different settings, in order to determine whether the word and some of its synonyms, such as 'grand', are *magical* words that add value to a product — and if so under which circumstances. The findings offer important implications for measurement theory, as well as for managers in terms of pricing and brand positioning, plus a number of useful research avenues are established.

Additionally, Van Doorn *et al* (2016) undertake an analysis of initial letters and brand names, by exploring what is commonly known as 'the K-effect'. Consequently, their findings propose an opportunity for those needing to name new brands or starting new companies.

CITY BRANDING

Over the past two decades, research has flourished on location, place, and city branding, as also discussed in JBM by Hackinson (2001), Caldwell and Freire (2004), Kerr (2006), Virgo and de Chernatony (2006), Hackinson (2007), Trueman *et al* (2007), Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2009), Gertner (2011), Braun (2012), and Zenker and Beckmann (2013).

Volume 23 presents further research on city branding via Green *et al* (2016), who suggest that a disconnect has formed between city branding research and practice, driven in part by divergent evolutionary paths of city branding research and practice. Their research identifies four major waves in city branding research: (i) initial possibilities, (ii) application and adaption of existing branding theory, (iii) development of a critical lens, and (iv) progressive approaches that intersect with the co-creation branding paradigm. They also identify three research gaps for fruitful investigation: the non-marketer-controlled city brand meaning-making processes should be explored, i.e. can city brand management groups support these processes in ways that facilitate strategic brand management objectives; a need for scholars to engage further in more critical city branding research; and finally a renewed focus is needed on a comprehensive understanding of what cities mean to people — which precedes effective adjustment of that meaning.

Additionally, Hafeez *et al* (2016) undertake interviews with Dubai's marketing/communication managers and stakeholders to explicate how place branding and image influence the development of Dubai's key traditional and newer sectoral clusters

(trading, tourism, logistics, construction, financial services, media and ICT services, manufacturing, healthcare, and education). Some of the managerial implications of the findings are as follows: need for clearly defined governance of place branding initiatives regarding the promotion of clusters; deciding upon an appropriate brand architecture for the place and its clusters; challenge of identifying and prioritising stakeholders in the place brand; and need to establish rigorous and objective measurement systems in order to evaluate the success or otherwise of place branding programmes. Further research is also called for in regards to testing the influence of place branding in developing key clusters in a comprehensive quantitative model, and further studies are needed to compare Dubai with other competing destinations.

BRANDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

For various reasons, including heightened competition, increased student mobility, and government-backed funding reductions, branding and brand management in Higher Education has been a burgeoning topic during the last decade or so (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Chapleo, 2011; Joseph *et al*, 2012; Melewar and Nguyen, 2014).

Accordingly, while drawing on the self-concept theory, Japutra *et al* (2016) investigate Brand Logos and develop a framework for achieving commitment through self-congruence and brand logo benefit in the context of the Indonesian Higher Education services sector. Their findings indicate that brand logos need to be managed more systematically in order to communicate the brand benefits while simultaneously helping to increase the congruity between the brand and the students' self. They propose that further research could be conducted to replicate their framework and apply it to other contexts and across categories, as well as in other cultures. Other variables may also be explored in order to extend their research.

Mirzaei *et al* (2016) also examine the brand associations of healthy and unhealthy universities. Their research unpacks methods to enable managers to promote more distinguished brand associations. It also highlights the importance of chosen media and message via Website and mobile applications, through owned online and mobile content. Future research may like to consider exploring University brand identity via use of the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix proposed by Urde (2013).

Finally, Chapleo and Clark (2016) consider the corporate brand management of a Canadian University via committee. In so doing, their research considers organisational brand analysis, organisational decisions about brand planning processes, and the branding stakeholder engagement process. The findings uncover a number of benefits plus pitfalls and drawbacks in using committees, and the results and implications may also be of use for other large organisations out-with the higher education sector.

LAUNCH OF THE *JOURNAL OF BRAND MANAGEMENT* 'ADVANCED COLLECTIONS' SERIES

In addition to Volume 23 is the launch of the *Journal of Brand Management* 'Advanced Collections' series. The aim of the series is to provide definitive and comprehensive coverage of broad subject areas. Books in the series are ideal reading for those undertaking a PhD programme or by upper-level students looking for rigorous academic material on the subject, and for scholars and discerning practitioners acting as 'advanced introductions'. Organised thematically, the series covers historically popular topics along with new and burgeoning areas that the journal has been instrumental in developing, showcasing the incremental and substantial contributions that the journal has provided. Each book is guest edited by a leading figure in the field

alongside the Journal Editors who will provide a new leading article that will cover the current state of research in the specific area (http://www.palgrave.com/gb/series/15099).

The series editors (Tim O. Brexendorf, Joachim Kernstock and Shaun M. Powell) launch the series via two books focused on (i) Advances in Corporate Branding (Balmer et al, 2016) and (ii) Advances in Chinese Brand Management (Balmer and Chen, 2016) followed by (iii) Advances in Luxury Brand Management (Kapferer et al, in press).

The prestigious edited collection of articles in the first book on Corporate Branding discusses the impact of research to date from the *Journal of Brand Management* on our understanding of corporate brand characteristics and corporate brand management. A wide range of topics are covered, including franchise brand management, co-creation of corporate brands, alliance brands, the role of internal branding in the delivery of employee brand promise, and the expansion into new approaches.

The second book on Chinese Brand Management includes a fascinating range of up-to-date articles on China from the *Journal of Brand Management* that marshal research and scholarship undertaken by Chinese, British, European, and American scholars. The development and management of brands in China has emerged as an area of considerable and growing interest among branding scholars and practitioners owing to the rise and significance of brands within China. Providing an overview of the development and management of brands in China, Advances in Chinese Brand Management also contains case studies of centuries old and greatly loved Chinese Corporate heritage brands, luxury brands, prominent cultural brands, and foreign brands in China.

The third book in the series discusses the impact of research on our understanding of luxury brand management characteristics. It starts from the beginning of the topic, covers the evolution of the main pillars of the field of luxury brand management, and gives an outlook to future trends. A wide range of topics are covered, including specificity of luxury management, the role of sustainability for luxury brands, insights from a customer point of view, and its measuring.

CONCLUSION

Volume 23 has provided additional cutting-edge analysis and some of the latest thinking in the field of brand management, as well as distilling future research avenues and questions. Moving forward, the Journal Editors continue to encourage the submission of original and insightful articles as well as industry-based case studies, plus invited expert commentaries and editorials which rigorously consider the following:

(i) Models and theories effectively used in brand management research and practice; (ii) how the world's leading companies are managing their brands; (iii) the latest thinking, techniques, and initiatives used by agencies and consultants; (iv) current case studies which explore leading organisations' practical experiences, the problems faced, and the lessons learned; and (v) applied research from leading business schools, research institutes, and universities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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