THINK SHORT

Short-Term Brands Revolutionize Branding

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Why is it Worth Your While to Read This e-Booklet?

In recent years, consumers exhibit an unprecedented readiness to try new brands and a preference for brand-variety over brand-loyalty (even loyalty to a consistent repertoire of brands), resulting in damage to brand survivability. To cope, marketers now need a supplemental tool to that of the familiar Long-Term Brand (LTB): the methodical creation and management of profitable Short-Term Brands (STB). In this e-booklet, I will clarify the need for STB, I shall define and describe the concept and finally, provide you with some guidelines for managing STB.

Introduction

Assume that you are about to introduce a new product into the market. If it were a new version of an existing branded product, for example a new flavor of a beverage, the inclination would be to extend the brand. Conventional marketing wisdom has it that the introduction of a new product under a familiar brand name will stimulate more consumers to try it, thus saving marketing efforts. When the task is to create an entirely new brand (which usually implies a new product launch, as well), the same conventional wisdom encourages long-term thinking.

'Conventional marketing wisdom' is a system of assumptions and beliefs, so widely accepted that any other possibility seems unthinkable. Is it possible that this way of thinking will lead to failure? Accumulative data, in the US and in Israel alike, indicates that we are bound to draw these conclusions because of a new reality in the marketplace. Deep changes that have taken place in consumer behavior that limit the scope of the present brand theory raising questions regarding some of its basic 'truths'[1][2]. I have studied these changes thoroughly and as a result, developed new concepts, methods and tools. I am happy to say that I have already implemented successfully the emergent branding approach that I am about to share with you as it proved extremely fruitful.

Brands In and Out (?) of Crisis

Experts of competitive strategy[3][4][5][6][7] have observed the new reality of market frenzy and wild competition for more than a decade. Early in the nineties initial data was published signaling that one of the characteristic of the turbulent marketplace is the damage caused to the survivability of brands, the pinnacle of modern marketing.

The damage became manifest in:

- The shortening of life expectancy of brands, even those successful in terms of sales volume.

- The success of lower priced private labels of retail chains, at the expense of established brands.

- Shrinking of the 'premium' the consumer is willing to pay for an established brand.

For some reason, 1994 was a focal year in this process. In this year, The Economist, The Financial Times and The Independent among others, all published articles announcing that brands are in trouble[8]. Gabriel and Lang[9] summed up this outcry by declaring, "It is now being argued by certain commentators that one hundred years of brands may be drawing to a close".

Surprisingly, in spite of these glooming prediction brands regained a renewed popularity and commanded even more vigorous interest. Branding agencies flourished. New concepts have been put forth like: Brand Experience, Emotional Branding, Brand Culture, and Brand Community to mention only a few. Brands seem stronger than ever. May we conclude that our ability to develop and manage brands is now satisfactory? Can we truly assume that the crisis is over? Not really.

In the fall of 2000, the consulting firm Copernicus and the research institute Market Facts undertook a joint research project. The study encompassed a nationally representative sample of 615 men and women, age 18 or older, randomly chosen from the Market Facts' Consumer Mail Panel. The study investigated the performance of 48 pairs of leading brands and 51 different product and service categories - both Old and New Economy businesses—in terms of differentiation.

In his report, titled 'The Commoditization of Brands'[10], Dr. Kevin J. Clancy, Chair person and CEO of Copernicus, comments:

> "We conclude that a majority of brands in a wide range of categories are becoming less and less differentiated, and more like commodities where price is the primary factor in the purchase decision".

The crisis may not be over yet, after all.

Is Consumer Loyalty a Disappearing Phenomenon?

Common brand theory maintains that we build brands for the long-term and that Brand Equity results mainly, both directly and indirectly, from customer loyalty. More than 80% of the interviewees in the 2001 online survey of 'best practices in brand management' conducted by the consulting firm Prophet[11], chose customer loyalty as the most important factor influencing brand strength. Unfortunately, it seems that consumer loyalty (even loyalty to a consistent repertoire of brands) is a disappearing phenomenon.

Researchers at the Leo Burnett advertising agency[12] published the results of a comprehensive research. During two years in the mid-nineties, they observed brands in the American market. The main findings were as follows:

- Most of the brands (60%) lost market-share.
- Only 15% of the brands enjoyed loyalty of the majority of their consumers (according to Leo Burnett's Buyer Strategy Segmentation system).

The research utilized store scanner data for a combined panel of consumers of two leading research companies: Nielsen and Information Resources Inc. It encompassed 28,000 households. The research examined 1,251 brands of packaged goods of different 14 consumptions categories. Excluded were brands introduced to the market during these two years and brands discontinued.

According to data[13], accumulated by the management consulting firm Bain & Co. on average, US-based companies lose over half their customers every five years. I often hear estimates by senior executives that the rate of annual churn in categories like cellular phones and credit cards, in Europe and the USA, is about 25% of the customers. The Customer base of such a company changes every 3-4 years.

Oddly, customer satisfaction has little to do with it. Customer satisfaction is no guarantee of customer loyalty. Moreover, retention rate does not seem to improve even when utmost attention is given to customer satisfaction. A study of 20 companies that scored well in the 1988 and 1989 federally sponsored annual Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award competition, showed that satisfaction increased yet retention levels remained the same or actually decreased[14]. Bain & Co. found that only 40% of Satisfied to Very Satisfied customers are generally retained and that 60 – 80% of customers who defected had said on survey just prior to defecting that they were Satisfied to Very Satisfied[15]. In a study by the consulting firm Juran Institute, out of 200 large US-based corporations[16], only 4 (!) were able to show that the improvement in satisfaction achieved by their programs actually increased sales or profits.

The above trend is only a partial description of the current situation. Simultaneously the continuing strength of established mega-brands is evident. Global Brands – Such as McDonald's, Nescafe, Nike, Microsoft, Sony and others – unite consumers' way of life worldwide. Nonetheless, Landor and Interbrand[17] show repeatedly that most of the brands occupying positions in the top 100 list have been there for at least 25-50 years, suggesting that mega-brands are becoming a rather exclusive club. It seems that creating even modest Long-Term Brands, has become more difficult and the chances of success have been reduced.

Some Widely Accepted Explanations

Several explanations have already been offered in an attempt to understand the reasons for the brand crisis:

- The markets in the USA and Europe have matured and are saturated. The growth rate of the market represents the natural growth rate of the population. Attempts to introduce additional brands cause 'brand explosion'.

- The results of the crowded competition lead to communication overload for the consumer. This situation erodes the images of existing brands. New brands often fail to gain enough impact.

- The fact that products are similar in characteristics and quality makes consumers feel that trying a new and unfamiliar brand is risk-free.

- The competitive pressure leads manufacturers to offer a large variety of products and products versions in an attempt to answer preferences of ever-smaller groups (e.g. variety of car classifications) resulting in an inability to continually support (by advertising, for example) the entire range.

- Media fragmentation has increased the price of reaching consumers through advertising. Thus, many US marketers resort to data base marketing. Alas, direct media (like mail) are often less effective in creating brand image than mass media (like television). Interactive media may be creating a new reality in this respect.

- Price competition and intensive use of promotional sales have made companies reluctant to allocate funds for image advertising.

An Additional Factor: Consumers Have Changed

The aforementioned explanations emphasize the behavior of marketers and its results. Although these explanations are valuable and call attention to valid factors, I am about to add another complementary factor: The fundamental change in consumers' preferences and behavior. There is now, an unprecedented openness to try, both new products and new brands manifested in a sweeping preference of brand variety and novelty over brand loyalty. This change interacts with the factors described above together creating the new situation in the market place.

An Israeli survey I conducted in February 1999[18] demonstrates the following preferences:

- 54% think that whoever does not try new products is 'out of touch'.

- 58% like to try new products often.

- 64% think that whoever does not try new products loses.

Most consumers use the terms 'product' and 'brand' interchangeably.

Much of my data originates in the Israeli market. Is such data relevant for other countries as well? Repeatedly, comparisons between Israeli data and data from the US and from western European countries, demonstrated that the Israeli consumer is very similar to consumers in other developed economies in terms of demographic and socio-economic distributions, general lifestyles and attitudes, brandscape, available retail formats, consumption patterns, buying behavior and brand affinity. Recently, multinational companies such as Gillette have started using Israel for market test of new products.

An additional survey I conducted in January 2001[19] further evidences considerable level of acceptance (Completely Agree and Tend to Agree') of statements expressing willingness to try new products. This survey also unearthed a new pattern of collecting product information continuously rather than when contemplating purchase, motivated by Social benefits stemming from being up to date on such matters. For instance:

- 'New products are often a conversation item with friends and family' – 75%.

- 'I keep abreast of new product introductions even without any specific intention to purchase' – 70%.

- 'I like trying new products' – 66%.

Consumer loyalty, discussed above, is weakening, because consumers constantly move on to new products and brands. This is evidenced by the rapid diffusion of new products and brands. Ironically, as a result, nowadays marketers often experience nowadays a delusory ease in launching new brands and success stories are amplifying the interest of the business community in brands. "A process that once took decades now gets done in a few years", wrote Court, Forsyth, Kelly and Loch of the consulting firm McKinsey summing up the findings of a research program in which they interviewed 5,000 consumers and covered 130 brands. "Our research reveals that an average retail lifecycle fell from 12 years in the 1970s to 5 years by the early 1990s"[20]. Following are some examples from the Israeli market corroborating these conclusions.

'Actimel', Danone's probiotic yogurt drink, was introduced into the Israeli market in December 1998. A survey performed[21] the same month showed that about 15% of the adult population tried the product within a few weeks.

In the coffee category, in which the consumer is assumed to have lasting preferences, 44% of the instant coffee drinkers have tried Elite's (Israel’s leading manufacturer of sweet food products and coffee) new 'Aroma' brand within five months of its launching in February 1999[22].

Whoever thinks these swift and sweeping changes are unique to the food market should consider the almost immediate entry of Gaba's 'Meridol'[15] toothpaste to the 19th place on the financial rating of non-food brands' sales in 1998 according to Nielsen Israel. Meridol is now the second most popular toothpaste brand, after Colgate, in a category renowned in the past for its stability due to consumers' firm habits.

'Strong umbrella brands' may often be an optical illusion. A survey I conducted in August 1999[23] suggests that 58% tend to try yogurt with fruit in new flavors introduced under the brand names Danone and Emmi, at least from time to time. 81% of them stated they would have tried such new products even if marketed under different brand names. They constitute 92% of those who try new yogurt with fruit flavors Usually or Always (those who try Usually or Always – 33%). These findings are consistent with Nielsen's evidence from other countries as well, that umbrella names have little influence on the success of new products.

In December 2001, Yoplait entered the Israeli market launching their yogurt with fruit up against Danone, a strong market leader enjoying 67% market share. Within one week (!) 47% of all buyers tried the newcomer (totally unknown previously to the Israeli consumer)[24]. Six months later, Yoplait had over 50% market share. The diet product line was introduced to the market in June 2002. It reached a 41% market share in the sub-category during the first week[25].

How about more durable and costly products?

South Korean cars were introduced to the Israeli market in the mid-1990s. In just two years, their combined market share was more than 15%. In 1999, Hyundai was the second best selling brand of family cars and most of these brands did quite well. Examples are ample in most, if not all, consumer goods and service categories.

Seth Godin agrees. In his 'Unleashing the Ideavirus'[26], Godin observes that: "It took 40 years for the radio to have ten million users. … It took 15 years for TV to have ten million users. It only took 3 years for Netscape to get to 10 millions, and it took hotmail and Napster less than a year". He concludes: "While early adopters (the nerds who always want to know about cool things in their field) have always existed, now we've got more nerds than ever"[27].

Another aspect of the tendency towards new products and brands is 'The Replacement Cycle' defined as "The rate at which customers replace their products/brands". I would like to emphasize that while technological improvements often drive replacement cycles in industries such as personal computers and wireless handsets, these cycles are also affected to a considerable degree by a socio-psychological factor relevant to other industries as well: the feeling that 'it is time to move on'. Social approval resulting from the rapid market penetration accelerates the process, at least for "network goods" where the total benefit that a consumer derives increases with the number of consumers who buy it.

Underlying Processes of Psychological and Social Change

We can view the changes in consumers' attitudes and behaviors within a wide context of Cultural, Psychological and Social processes of change that occurred during the 20th century. These changes are characteristic to Western opulent societies.

An individual's life in modern society, our lives in fact, is typified by several characteristics worth mentioning:

- We face a huge variety of choice options. The revolutions in transportation, communication and information are rendering the world more accessible. We are free to choose among different places to visit or live in. We encounter a large variety of people, cultures, worldviews and life styles. We face rich assortments in every aspect of life, including consumption. Furthermore, we are bound to make more and more life shaping choices: our leaders, spouses, and professions. Even the responsibility of shaping our identity is largely ours. We have the right and even the obligation to 'discover', define and develop ourselves. We choose from a wide Social-cultural 'menu' of identities. Social mobility through education and entrepreneurship is without precedent. The resulting development of human capability and the ability to cope with such a large variety and to choose from it what seems right for every individual (as well as the legitimization to invent new possibilities) is the most important and radical change of our time.

- The exposure to various possibilities evidently undermines our belief in absolutes, 'an incontestable truth' or 'the right way'. This is the basis of post-modernity. Together with other processes, this fact has weakened Social structures and institutions as well as authorities. It gave birth to a new openness to the different, the other and the new.

- Due to the weakening of institutionalized sources of legitimacy, the individual faces 'culture', 'society' and even 'the world', without the mediation of a community. Our community is no longer unitary and significant. We define it in a flexible and changing manner. We take part of groups that are disconnected from one another and some of these communities are abstract or virtual. Our affiliation is temporary, in many cases.

- We have grown accustomed to a much faster tempo. "Technology has been a rapid heartbeat, compressing housework, travel, entertainment, squeezing more and more into the allotted span" writes Social historian Theodore Zeldin[28]. In 1999, Agnieszka Winkler coins the term 'Time Compression'. She notes that[29]: "We are living in a sliver of time during which 10 years has redefined the concept of fast food from a drive-through McDonald's to a 30 second microwave meal; nail polish dries in 30 seconds; photos are developed in one hour; and money comes out of street corner machines instantly. We have not said the word 'computer' yet! We no longer think of FedEx as a big deal. Even faxing is cumbersome. …".

- The fast pace of changes during the 20th century has eroded the status of tradition and 'elderly wisdom' in exchange for admiring novelty and worshipping youth. This is especially true in light of technological developments and the possibility of Social and Economic success at young age (in hi-tech or the stock market, for example). "Routinely, most of the truths a person over 40 grew up believing, are now questioned", writes Judy Lannon[30].

- Authors depicting the postmodern era claim that we live in a perpetual 'now' in which the past loses its value and the future is unknown. The focus is on the present, to which we are required to adapt quickly, emphasizing immediacy.

- Some theorists in psychology questioned the notion of one integral self. According to Gordin and Lindlof: "Destabilization of the self, is one of the characteristics of post-modernity… individuals may find that they no longer need a central core with which to evaluate and act"[31]. Therefore, they can afford to be a somewhat 'different person' each time, with different people, in different contexts. Kellner says: "Identity becomes more mobile, multiple, personal, self-reflexive and subject to change and innovation"[32]. Radical theoretical approaches[33] describe a coalition of sub-personalities as an alternative model to the common concept of unitary personality.

Furthermore, let's not forget that life expectancy has increased. "When life goes on for almost a century" writes Zeldin, "it is time to reconsider whether man wants to dedicate all of it to riding the same bus."[34].

Enters the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

These developments and process forge a consumer (person) living in a new reality who has developed new characteristics. The emerging portrait is that of a person swept by an intoxicating abundance of options. A new basic motivation is leading this person: the ambition to exhaust as many possibilities as he/she can and the fear to miss out on something. I have been researching The Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) as a socio-cultural phenomenon, as a motivation and as a personality factor for the past four years. I have studied it's implications for marketers and have come to believe that this motivation might be one of the main causes of the brand crisis described above.

As a motivation, the FoMO has five major manifestations discernible in most of us in varying degrees:

- We strive to make the best use we can of our limited time while 'having it all'.
    - ⇒ While in past decades we usually accepted that there is a trade-off between pursuing a career and devoting oneself to family life and that one has to make a choice, nowadays many try to achieve both plus Social activities, hobbies, fitness training and more. This leads to a rather hectic schedule and raises the need for more efficient time management.
    - ⇒ Advertising agency Publicis researchers spotted a new consumption phenomenon of the 1990's: unification of contrasts or the era of 'this and that too'[35]. Consumers want uncompromising combinations of gourmet taste and low calorie content, they want beauty and comfort, low price and high quality. They are willing to accept combinations of science and nature, conventional and holistic medicine.

      Analogously, we see a wave of '2/3/4…in 1' products: shampoo and conditioner, tooth paste and mouth wash. Fusion in the kitchen, design, music and lifestyle – has become fashionable.
    - ⇒ We have learned to do several things simultaneously. We are 'Multitaskers' as James Gleick describes it[36]: "These days it is possible to drive, eat, listen to a book, and talk on the phone, all at once, if you dare. No segment of time – not a day, not a second – can really be a zero-sum game". We often 'Zap' between television channels to view at least two programs in parallel.
    - ⇒ Many people have more than one career during their working years and certainly work in several organizations. Consequently, there is a preoccupation in both literature and media dealing with 'second career' and there is a multitude of routes available for retraining. Even 'IDF 2000', the multi-annual planning of the Israeli army up to 2010, heralds the transfer from long-term and safe careers of professional army personnel to short and worthwhile careers that can compete with civilian positions. During the last decade or so, gold watches received by veterans of

two, three or four decades of loyal employment in one company have become a term of derision.

    - ⇒ Many live in more than one family unit during their lifetime and surely have more than one meaningful intimate relationship.

    - ⇒ We witness an ever-growing population of singles experiencing difficulty to commit to one partner 'forsaking all others'.

- We aspire to be as multifarious as possible.

    - ⇒ People who have a wide range of interests and occupations, who make changes in their appearance, whose clothing style vary and who exhibit openness to explore new concepts, designs and cuisines, are considered more 'interesting'. They tend to serve as models for imitation. It is especially 'Bon Ton' to encompass elements seen as contradictory in the past. Combinations such as computers, painting, the stock market and yoga.

    - ⇒ We legitimize and socially reward, a wide, even contradictory, repertoire of behaviors and the ability to change and adapt ('flexibility'). For example: Many people take pride in the ability to be tough and bossy at work, sensitive and affectionate with their close family, macho with their friends in the pub and sophisticated while entertaining business associates visiting from abroad. It may be worthwhile remembering that in the not so distant past it was desirable to have 'a character', consistent and persistent.

    - ⇒ During past decades several theoretical and research approaches were developed to segment and describe consumer groups according to values, attitudes, and lifestyle characteristics ('psychographic' descriptions). During the last few years professionals claim that these segmentations are no longer valid since many consumers of our times 'belong' to different classifications on different days of the week and even during different hours of the day.

- We try to be as up to date as possible.

    - ⇒ We attempt to keep abreast with news, new concepts, new fashions, new gadgets, technological novelties, etc.

    - ⇒ We often value trying out new restaurants and travel destinations over having 'our usual place' or returning year after year to our favorite summer resort (this, of course, is a sharp departure from past preferences). The phenomenon of 'been there, done that' has an enormous impact on brand loyalty.

- We want almost constant availability and immediate communication so as not to miss any opportunity.
  - ⇒ Our cell phones are usually switched on.
  - ⇒ We check our e-mail boxes often.
  - ⇒ Due to all these communication devices, we are more connected than ever to other people, communication is far more frequent and news travel fast.
- We seek immediacy and instant gratification.
  - ⇒ We demand 24/7 service.
  - ⇒ New channels featuring unceasing live coverage of world events, the likes of CNN, Fox News and BBC Worldwide, enjoy considerable popularity. A recent addition to the Live Coverage is the use of simultaneous scrolls of more information in text and numbers.
  - ⇒ More than ever before, we now consume fast food and microwave dinners ('Eat and Run' is a witty description used by James Gleik[37]). On the street, we have coffee-to-go, and at home, instant coffee is by far the most popular kind of coffee drink.
  - ⇒ Amazon.com's 'One Click Ordering' is a great success.
  - ⇒ The 1983 volume titled 'One-Minute Bedtime Stories' comprised of traditional stories in a condensed format. The Amazon.com catalog now has more than 160 books that have the expression 'One-Minute' in their title.

Missing out is physically inevitable. The Fear of Missing Out, on the other hand, is an emotional reaction. FoMO can be a good thing. It drives us to lead richer and fuller lives. However, to benefit from it we face several challenges:

- Develop the ability to deal with a wide variety and to choose.
- Lead complex lives and manage efficiently our attention, time and resources.
- To 'Know what we want' and to avoid the potential harms of FoMO such as indecision, lack of focus commitment or persistence, stress, frustration and chronically being late.

My January 2001 survey showed that approximately 75% of adult Israelis experience FoMO to various degrees. 28% cope well (using the criteria listed above). The ability to cope well with FoMO positively and significantly correlates with financial success, Social success and high levels of life satisfaction. One can only speculate regarding the direction of causality.

Marketers Change Their Behavior

Once we understand the contemporary consumer and the reality of his life, it is easy to identify the limitations of the present brand theory. A prolonged commitment of the consumer to a brand appears less likely. Having said that, let me emphasize that I do not claim that Long-Term Brands are becoming obsolete, far from it. Later on, I shall elaborate on their current roles in the consumer's world. Nevertheless, we can justifiably claim that the common theory of brands does not yet provide a comprehensive enough solution to address the new behavior of consumers. Therefore, brand theory is in need of a rather radical revision.

When trying to delineate what such modification should be, it may be wise to note that some of the marketers have already adapted their behavior to the new reality. We can distinguish two types of changes:

- Changes in the Management of 'regular' (long-term) brands

  Two well-known versions of Long-Term Brands evolved during the history of brands in addition to the original model (a product that does not change):

  1. 'Evolving Brands' – introducing improvements and innovations in the product or product line without altering the brand name. A perfect example is the Power Rangers brand introduced to the market at the beginning of the 1990's. Recently, a new generation was presented. Similarly, there are many examples of 'new and improved' products or even completely new products under the same brand name (tablets instead of powder for dishwashers).

  2. 'Variety Brands' – a wide variety of product versions under the same brand name (Samsonite, for example). Many brands have expended their variety in order to fulfill a wide range of needs, to offer different market segments products that are specifically suited to them specifically ('light' and 'medium' versions of cigarettes), while offering the consumer choice and renewal without having to 'abandon' the brand. On top of that, brand extension

to additional categories is a common practice, of course.

- Brands Planned for a limited 'life expectancy'

  According to common brand theory, a short 'life span' brand (when compared to brands of the same product category in the past) was considered a failure. Recently, however, in many cases, a brand is an unmistakable success in terms of its sales volume, but its success is short-lived. In children's entertainment, for example, characters such as Lilo and Stitch now succeed for one or two seasons in contrast to Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck in the past. In fragrances, most brands are now expected to succeed for 2 – 3 seasons, unlike Channel 5 and Poison. In cars, brands such as Clio are supposed to succeed for 5-10 years in contrast to Ford Fiesta or Renault 5.

  The following is a list of examples of brands that were successful for a relatively short period. The categories are extremely diverse. They include clothing (safari suits), food (frozen yogurt); toiletries and cosmetics (Gillette Sensor, Yves Saint Laurent's seasonal 'looks'); diets (Slim-Fast); toys (Tamaguchi, Furby); entertainment (Pocahontas); music (Disco); vacation destinations (Palma De-Majorca); exercise (Ski Machines); technology (Windows Me); cars (Fiat Punto, Chevrolet Corsica, BMW Z3, …); drugs (Prozac); management theories (TQM); and there are many more.

  You may recall that in all of these categories, consumers behaved more consistently ('brand loyalty') in previous generations. Although it may not seem obvious at first, many of the start-up companies we have witnessed during the high-tech boom of the late 1990s, (some of which invested heavily in branding efforts) were designed for the short-term and intended to be bought by large corporations and eventually merged into them.

  Naturally, there is a great variance in life expectancies of brands across product categories.

  Many marketers have begun to introduce brands anticipating that their life expectancy be limited. Changes in management of such brands, are intuitive, lacking an organizing term and a Short-Term Brands methodology, and are often done in an atmosphere of resignation to reality. The 'Blockbuster' approach to the introduction of new drugs in the pharmaceutical industry is a notable exception where the opportunity in STB is more readily recognized.

Even branding professionals adopted some new practices appropriate for the new consumer reality, without acknowledging it. As little as a decade ago, we used to carry out changes of logo gradually over time, so that the process will be almost unnoticeable to consumers. Now, we execute such changes rather abruptly because consumers have no problem adapting to them instantly.

Short-Term Brands (STB)

The widespread reaction to the changes in consumer behavior described above was to assume that it is necessary to work harder and maybe follow a somewhat different course of action, in order to continue and create Long-Term Brands (LTB) in all instances. I would like to propose an additional option, which is the professional and purposeful creation of Short-Term Brands (STB). Strategy can be STB-based but it is also possible to use STB in tandem with LTB (in brand architectures which I shall present later on).

The term 'Short-Term Brand' does not yet exists in the jargon of marketing professionals. I pioneered its use in print in a 'Journal of Brand Management' paper issued in October 2000[38]. Almost simultaneously, Mr. Rajeev Bakshi, Managing director of Cadbury India, was the first to use the term in public in August 31, 2000. "Companies are beginning to rethink their design of products, services and manufacturing and the whole issue of Long-Term Brands and brand value are being debated" he said[39]. "With brands now having shorter life cycles, the whole debate of long-term versus Short-Term Brands arises. Consumer loyalty is fast becoming a disappearing phenomenon, with an increasing demand for brand variety"[40].

More recently, the Kindred / Keziah consulting firm, titled their talk at the July 2002 Account Planning Group Conference in Washington D.C. 'Embracing One-Night-Stand Brands: Why Long-Term Companies Are Creating Short-Term Brands'[41].

These voices are presently a small minority. To many, Short-Term Brands will sound like a contradiction in terms since according to common brand theory, brands are 'meant to last for the long-term'.

The main reason to plan Short-Term Brands is the fact that consumers have made many brands 'short-term' anyway. The data presented indicates that the chances that a new brand will succeed in the short-term are larger than its chances to succeed in the long-term. Consumers' willingness to try a new brand does not fall short of their willingness to try a familiar and extended brand. In fact, it might even surpass it.

Based on consultations with executives and conversations with participants in seminars I conduct on STB, many marketers accept the Short-Term Brands concept, at first, as bad news ('why invest in something for the short-term?') before realizing what tremendous opportunities they open to us. There is, also, an understandable tendency to explain away a new concept by seeing it as merely a new name to a known one. Some mistake Short-Term Brands to be a renaming of trendy products or fads. This may lead to missing the true potential of the new concept. Characteristics of trendy products and fads are indeed noticeable in Short-Term Brands, but they are now evident in more product categories than ever before, thus creating a definitively new phenomenon. "Like it or not" writes Seth Godin, "we are all in the fashion business"[42].

At this point, I would like to offer a simple definition of short- versus Long-Term Brands.

STB are planned for a limited period of existence.

LTB are planned for an unlimited period of existence.

Even if Short-Term Brands were conceived under duress, they are a new and much needed tool for marketers, because they offer today's consumers benefits that Long-Term Brands are incapable of providing, particularly Psychological and Social benefits.

The Psychological and Social Usefulness of Brands

Please allow me to digress for a while and present my point of view on the Psychological and Social benefits of brands, frequently referred to as a form of 'Value Added' or more recently, as 'Emotional Branding'. Such benefits are derived from both LTB and STB.

It is widely accepted that beyond the function of the product (intrinsic benefits) and tangible value added in the marketing mix, brands can offer the consumer Psychological and Social benefits (extrinsic benefits). This important notion has unfortunately been the source of many misconceptions in marketing, mainly because of over-personification of brands and treating them as almost actual human beings.

Metaphors were carried a bit too far. It has been claimed that brands have personalities and charisma, that they incarnate values and hold emotional significance for consumers, and that consumers love them, have relationships with them even worship them. Such fetishist ideas are insupportable by our knowledge of consumer psychology and they are at odds with common sense. Consider that few devoted consumers ever volunteered to help in the manufacturing plant or offered financial support when their 'beloved' brand got into trouble.

Here is what differentiates whatever attachment consumers have to brands from true human relationship and love: Brand affinity merely constitutes a meeting of interests (interests that may be personally essential for the consumer and therefore emotionally involving), it never constitutes a mutual commitment, or a partnership. It is only self-delusory thinking otherwise. By immersing ourselves in our jargon we get ever more inattentive to consumer reality. Such ideas are damaging to the creation and successful management of brands.

My contention is that consumers want brands solely because they expect to benefit and only if they indeed experience such anticipation (which is consistently gratified). This is obviously true for tangible benefits. However, the same rule applies to Psychological and Social benefits as well.

Emotional Brands are supposed to be brands with which consumers form an emotional bond that is independent of the product's function. It is assumed that such bonds have nothing to do with benefits derived from the brand. I believe this conclusion to be a severe mistake. The benefit is not tangible in these cases, but it is nonetheless a benefit. I argue that we can deem emotional branding successful only when consumers expect the brand to have Social and/or Psychological usefulness, even instrumentality (I will clarify this kind of instrumentality shortly).

The recent popularity of Emotional Branding was often based on the erroneous assumption that emotions can be simply 'glued' to brands by means of advertising. This assumption originated in the Classical Conditioning theory (you will recall Ivan Pavlov and his experiments with the salivating dogs). Today, this theory is largely obsolete, and thus abandoned as a means for modeling the attribution of emotional significance by humans. The unfortunate result was ineffectiveness of many branding campaigns.

So, how do brands achieve emotional significance? The first point to realize is that consumers' feelings are not really related towards the brand itself. Let us not be confused. The only emotions that brands evoke in consumers result from anticipating the benefit. The reason for this is not shrouded in some kind of mystique. It is the very nature of the human emotional system. Humans experience positive / negative emotions, respectively, whenever perceiving anything, including a brand, as bringing them closer to / pushing them away from, their goals (for people benefit when realizing their goals).

In line with these observations, I offer to define a brand as follows:

> **A brand is an anticipation experienced by a target group, for a specific benefit about to be derived from an identified source (a product, a service, and so forth) often associated with a standardized set of symbolic representations (name, logo, icon, color, image, etc.).**

To fully understand this definition, think of the particular and distinct anticipation of benefit evoked by such brand names as James Bond, Paris, Apple and Mercedes.

From this standpoint, a marketer can claim ownership of a brand only if his target consumers attribute to his product and/or service the ability of consistently delivering (exclusively, if possible) a certain desired experience or a beneficial result. The more motivating and unique is the expected benefit – the stronger the desire and the more lasting the preference.

An anticipation of benefit will not last if not consistently fulfilled. According to my approach, **Branding is the creation of a system of both arousing anticipation for and providing fulfillment of, brand benefits ('Promises').**

Earlier, I claimed that 'Emotional Brands' arouse feelings in consumers because they are instrumental psychologically or socially. What do I mean by that?

Next to usages leading directly to experiential benefits (desired sensual or emotional experiences) and usages resulting in tangible benefits (desired effects in the physical world, including in one's body), consumer use products and services,

- To reassure themselves and relieve anxiety
- To bring about mood changes and a sense of being refreshed
- To encourage themselves and inspire optimism
- To cultivate motivation
- To strengthen their sense of self and invigorate self-image
- To reward themselves and to heighten self esteem
- To compensate themselves
- To obtain legitimization for certain demeanors and to strengthen self-confidence
- To internalize Social roles
- To assign personal meaning to certain dates, places and other components of the surrounding environment
- To support certain interpretations of reality (sometimes quite fictional) and self-delusion
- To escape, take a break from both actual self and reality, and to experience emotions scarce in real life and fantasies that are impossible, dangerous or very costly to realize

These are Psychological uses.

Consumers also use products and services,

- To convey,
  - ⇒ Certain personality traits ('conscientious', 'up-datedness'…)
  - ⇒ Linkage to specific Social stereotypes ('yuppie', 'intellectual, 'bohemian')
  - ⇒ Belonging to particular groups
  - ⇒ Having a Social role
  - ⇒ Having a socio-economic status
  - ⇒ A certain level of sophistication and refinement
  - ⇒ Having certain tastes and preferences

  etc

  in order to comply with a norm and / or to manage other people's impressions influencing their attitudes

- To express emotions

- To create an atmosphere and to evoke emotions (thus preserving, shaping or furthering a relationship)

- To create shared experiences, meanings and rituals (thus preserving, shaping or furthering a relationship)

These are Social and interacting uses.

In some cases, Psychological or Social instrumentality is the intrinsic, core benefit of the product or service (e.g. psychotherapy, motivational books, and gifts). However, we focus our attention here on Psychological or Social instrumentality as an extrinsic benefit.

Destining brands to be instrumental psychologically or socially is a strategic option. This means of course, designating the brand for a specific function based on one of the options listed above and having a specific content. It is gaining insight into what consumers are trying to accomplish psychologically and/or socially, that presents us with opportunities to shape brands for Psychological or Social gratification.

There are prerequisites for devising a strategy for a successful emotional brand:

- Specific is what does it. A major problem with the widespread practice of Emotional Branding is the attempt of most brand developers to associate their brands with general positive feelings (in order to appeal to an as wide as possible an public). However, it turned out that there are no nearly enough distinct positive feelings to allow differentiation between all rival brands.

Strong brands like Coca-Cola, Timberland and Versace, take an entirely different path. It is the path of specificity in their Psychological or Social instrumentality. Coca-Cola enables us, on a Psychological level, to re-experience the primal and powerful feelings of youth unattenuated by experience and perspective. Timberland facilitates the fantasy of adventure confronting the powers of nature. Versace is a means for expressing extravagance and an eccentric personality.

When planning Psychological or Social instrumentality I strongly recommend detailing a scenario of the brand being used by the consumer. The scenario should include situational aspects, actions, conversations, thoughts and feelings involved – all expressed verbally. The brand's instrumentality in achieving the consumer's sought after benefit should be evident.

- Catering to an unsatisfied or under satisfied Psychological or Social need, or to a need that might be satisfied considerably better than it is by any existing alternative or in a markedly new way (where sheer novelty is an advantage).

For most practical purposes, instruments for the achievement of Psychological and Social ends are not essentially different from means to a desired experience or from instruments to a physical effect. I am of the opinion that the best approach is to treat developing brands for Psychological and Social instrumentality in the same way we treat developing products and services for experiential or physical instrumentality. This means seeking differentiation and positioning for competitive advantage.

How do we actually create the Psychological or Social instrumentality?

My methodology for crafting brand strategies defines and provides tools for the creation of seven branding extents[43]. These extents range from brands meant to facilitate the enjoying of intrinsic benefits (as well as tangible extrinsic benefits originating in the marketing mix), to brands designed to allow extrinsic benefits resulting from Psychological and/or Social instrumentality. It is the strategist's responsibility to choose the suitable extent for the brand to be developed.

The seven extents are growing in complexity with each one inclusive of all the 'capabilities' of those who precede it.

The seven extents are:

1. Arousing anticipation by focusing the consumer's attention on an intrinsic benefit of the product or on a tangible (experiential or physically instrumental) value added in the marketing mix.

This is the approach to use when the product or service has a substantial and lasting competitive advantage. The role of branding in this case is to make the advantage apparent to the consumer and to associate it closely with the source. A good example is Domino's Pizza - the pizza delivery champion, expediting the experience of enjoying Pizza.

2. Arousing anticipation and contributing to fulfillment by creating a mental context for associating the diverse product / service facts that the consumer encounters under a unitary specific beneficial concept.

   At this level of branding, we seek to give to the various marketing efforts, the service, innovations, etc, one particular umbrella meaning, emphasizing a benefit (for example: Easy Group's dedication to accessibility, affordability and ease of use services), this way creating a cumulative impression that is repeatedly reinforced.

   The simplest form of this extent of branding often occurs spontaneously and is familiar to us as 'reputation'. It is based upon inferences made by the consumer from facts like 'long lived', 'a very large corporation', 'has many branches', etc. In this manner, well known brands can reduce anxiety regarding mistakes in choice and contribute to making our reality more predictable. Mega brands also create a global 'brandscape'[44] making new places more 'familiar' and friendlier.

3. Arousing anticipation and contributing to fulfillment by suggesting a crystallizing concept meant to direct and influence an otherwise ambiguous product / service experience.

   At this level, we create expectations that will be transformed into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Many experiences are of an uncertain nature and can be perceived and then conceived, in a multitude of ways. The expectations we induce direct this process, much like in hypnosis. This is accomplished by suggesting to the consumer a concept (like Haagen Dazs' sensual, erotic and indulgent ice cream for adults) that will alter, to some degree, his/hers subjective experience of the product or service.

4. Simultaneously arousing anticipation and enabling fulfillment by creating a symbol that has a shared meaning within a Social group.

   This is the first level where benefit is altogether extrinsic even though it often befits the nature of the product or service. By creating a symbolic meaning for the brand, we make it useful to consumers both in internal dialogue (Psychological instrumentality, for instance Zippo – use it to start something) and interpersonal communication (Social instrumentality, e.g. Harley Davidson that serves as a symbol of being free and wild at heart, if not in actual life).

5. Simultaneously arousing anticipation and enabling fulfillment by assuming Social and/or cultural authority.

   At this level, brands post themselves as a source of legitimacy and become useful for the consumer in learning accepted values and norms of behavior: what is proper, what is admirable, what will bring happiness, etc. (Nokia's ad portraying a woman romancing another woman in a bar, comes to mind).

6. Simultaneously arousing anticipation and enabling fulfillment by offering to serve as an extension of the consumer's reach and power, as an envoy or by suggesting being an Alter Ego.

   At this level, brands propose to

   - Serve as 'the long arm' of the consumer, doing something that the consumer would like to do but is unable to accomplish by himself or herself (e.g. Body Shop)

   - Act as the consumer would like to but dare not (provocative, audacious, autonomous, rebellious – take Virgin, for instance)

7. Simultaneously arousing anticipation and enabling fulfillment by inviting the consumer to recreate and mentally personalize a fantasy.

   At this final level brands facilitates fantasies of omnipotence, of unlimited sex appeal, of importance, of adventure, etc. First, we instill a promise of a certain feeling in the consumers' mind. Then, consuming or using the product becomes a cue to 'connect' to that feeling and experience it (think of Marlboro and the feeling of powerfulness that results from self restrain and control). This is a genuinely hypnotic effect. From a different perspective, it is not unlike buying a ticket to a certain genre of film promising a predictable type of emotional experience.

While the promises of brands of extents 1 – 3 originate in product or service facts, brands of extents 4 – 7 derive their potency exclusively from the consumer's disposition to find in them a means to a Psychological or Social end.

Having chosen our brand's benefit to its target consumers and the extent of branding, we can proceed to articulate the brand's promise. A brand promise is an invitation for the consumer to accept our brand as his or hers preferred means to the goal.

The Psychological and Social Usefulness of STB

Short-Term Brands can offer the consumer Psychological and Social instruments too. Benefit types are those gained through perpetually buying new brands. A focus groups study conducted in the spring of 1999[45] helped me discern them.

Buying a new brand can be socially instrumental because it -

- Signals to others that you are up-to-date ('cool', 'fashionable')
- Is often a part of a continuous signaling of affiliation and active participation
- Conveys a message of 'youthfulness', openness and flexibility

The focus groups study revealed that finding and trying new brands constitutes a factor of considerable importance in marital, familial and social life (Social instrumentality). Openness to the new is obvious in products with a social character. However, it can also be seen in more personal product categories like toothpaste or body lotion, to which "the skin gets used to it and after some time it's effectiveness ceases", as one of the participants testified (Psychological instrumentality).

Buying a new brand can be psychologically instrumental because it -

- Strengthens the self-image of someone who is current
- Nurtures a feeling of liveliness and connectedness to what is happening in the world around us
- Provides a refreshing, renewed, stimulated and invigorated feeling
- Facilitates mood management (breaking routine, liberation from a feeling of 'being stuck')
- Increases confidence in a purchase choice because 'new' often implies improved quality

I found supporting evidence expressed as agreement to statements such as the following in my February 1999 survey:

- 'When I am in a bad mood I often buy new products to improve it' – 22%

- 'I buy new products in order to break routine and relieve boredom' – 38%

- 'When I buy a new product I feel refreshed' – 55%

We can conclude that each type of brand, long-term and short-term, fulfils a basic human need. Long-term, fulfill the need of stability, continuity and security. Short-term, fulfill the need for renewal and of sensual, emotional and intellectual stimulation.

STB Constitute a Possible New Path to Customer Loyalty

The gospel of CRM with its soothing promise of practically lifelong customers, directed many marketers to focus their attention on catering to customers expectations and to monitoring their misleading satisfaction. At the same time, it led them to underestimate, even neglect, the consumer's need for novelty and stimulation. There is nothing wrong with CRM in itself, of course. It is a matter of how it is used as a marketing tool.

In an HBR paper[46], Stephen Brown voices a wake up call to marketers: "Marketers spend all their time slavishly tracking the needs of buyers, then meticulously crafting products and pitches to satisfy them. … My friends, it's gone too far. … (Customers) do not want us to prostate ourselves in front of them and promise to love them, till death do us part. They'd much rather be teased, tantalized, and tormented by deliciously insatiable desire. … Marketing is about glitz and glamour. It is mischievous and mysterious. Marketing, lest we forget, is fun". Hear! Hear!

In another HBR article[47], Suzy Wetlaufer, in summing up ('The Idea at Work') some of Bernard Arnault's recommendations for creating star brands writes, "Don't follow consumers. You won't generate breakthrough products, and people won't pay premium prices for something they expect. Instead, let creators drive innovation …".

It may be that the way to retain today's consumers driven by the fear of missing out on (FoMO), in many product and service categories, is to adopt a strategy of winning their heart anew repeatedly by surprising them, exciting and delighting them. A successiveness of new STB that they might miss out on (combined with LTB, as I shall explain shortly) is a viable strategy for keeping the customers' enthusiasm and attraction fresh.

I know that this option may seem wearying to marketers, and so it truly is, considering the way they operate. The adoption of such strategy calls for organizational changes as well as changes in work processes and, most importantly in culture. However, once these are accomplished, my experience clearly demonstrates that marketing gusto and competitiveness are transformed miraculously.

Managing Short-Term Brands

During my years of work with the concept of STB I have gathered a rather large knowledge base. I started with learning from the accumulated experience of marketing products and services in fields characterized by brands having limited life expectancy: fashion, movies, children's games, etc. To that, I added observations and generalizations made from studying cases of dozens of short lived but indisputable successes of brands in other categories. Later, I moved on to working with companies developing STB in various fields. This work has given me an invaluable opportunity to sharpen my conceptualization of STB, gain more insights and continually perfect my method. I would like to share some of these with you. In the concluding part of this e-booklet, I will set about formulating some basic principles, guidelines and practical suggestions that might be useful for developing and managing STB.

What can you achieve by using STB?

Short-Term Brands can serve the following marketing endeavors:

- Launching new products or new product versions that have some trendy or fashionable quality, that represent a considerable progress from a previous version, or that have a limited life expectancy, for any reason.

- Gradually enriching the meaning of a superordinate Long-Term Brand or performing a step-by–step rebranding.

- Preserving the strategic focus of a Long-Term Brand, while taking advantage of trends and fashions with STB.

  “The power of the brand is inversely proportional to its scope,” say Al Ries and Laura Ries in their book 'The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding'[48]. Using LTB in combination with STB is helpful in creating more focused brands and can be, in many cases, a preferred alternative to brand extension.

  According to Bernard Arnault of LVMH, a Star Brand has to be timeless and modern at the same time. "you must be old and new at once. In a star brand you honor your past and invent your future at the same time"[49] he says. STB and LTB combines can make following this dictum somewhat easier.

- Introducing events, projects, large promotional campaigns, special activities, limited period services, etc.

- Testing the market potential of a new product or service concept.

- Maintaining flexibility. The unpredictability that we encounter in our markets often necessitates planning for the short-term.

Note that we can brand for the short-term practically everything that we can brand for the long term including: a product, a product line, an organization, a company, a person (for example, during a campaign), etc.

Indications for the use of STB

It is particularly advisable to consider the creation of Short-Term Brands,

- When a strong market leader already exists

- Where technology changes and new developments are frequent

- When category experience indicates a short lived interest of the consumer in brands

- In product categories in which one or more of the following applies:

    - ⇒ Product consumption is accompanied by a sensual experience.

    - ⇒ Use of the product is public/observable and connected with Social interaction or can be used as a topic for conversation.

    - ⇒ Benefit of the product is doubtful but the desire for the benefit is strong (diets) or the benefit perceived is at the fantasy level.

Analyzing characteristics of those who expressed agreement with TGI[50] statements indicating a strong tendency to buy new products, as well as a cluster analysis performed on the findings of my February 1999 survey raise the following description of the most significant target group for Short-Term Brands (about one quarter of the population):

- A higher than expected proportion of:
    - ⇒ Women
    - ⇒ People in the age group 24-45 (thereby a relatively high rate of families with children under 16-years of age)
    - ⇒ Income level average and above
    - ⇒ Employees
    - ⇒ Secular people
    - ⇒ People conducting a modern lifestyle (e.g. frequently consuming frozen food)
- A marked tendency towards entertainment
- A comparatively high level of attention to appearance
- A relatively low level of interest in news, in actuality, documentary and even TV sports shows
- In contrast, a relatively high level of interest in talk shows, TV games, films, satire, and cultural programs
- People who enjoy commercials more than the rest of the population

In terms of Psychological profiling, it seems that these people are adaptable, sociable, self-monitoring and escapists to a certain degree.

STB- embedded Brand Architectures

In my work with Short-Term Brands, I have found three alternative brand architectures to be very useful:

1. Pure STB:

   The first and the simplest, is an architecture composed of a chronological sequence of thematically unrelated STB. Each one of these brands is entirely independent and each succeeds or fails on its own merit. None of them is identified, in any way, with their mutual marketer. Each one has a timely appeal to its target market.

2. The Background – Foreground architecture:

   In many cases, we introduce a short- term brand under the 'auspices' of a Long-Term Brand (e.g. a corporate brand) which is not at the center of attention and does not have a rich meaning to the consumer. Its role is simply to alleviate concern regarding product quality.

   This architecture is not to be confused with the familiar hierarchical approach of branding levels. The role of the background brand, the LTB, is to calm, to reduce perception of risk by the consumer. It is the foreground STB, on which the headlights focus. The STB is the ultimate source of benefit to the consumer. It is its role to command attention, excite and create desire.

   Disney and Monsters, Inc. are a good example of this architecture.

3. The Star – Satellites architecture:

   In this architecture, the LTB is the celebrated star and the STB is a satellite. STB are used in the Star – Satellites architecture to highlight products, services, events, special projects, etc, under the endorsement of the LTB but having a contemporary short-term relevance. The LTB's strategic focus remains intact although we sometimes use the STB either to enrich the LTB's meaning or to divert it toward rebranding.

   Calvin Klein's CK One and CK Be collections of fragrances exemplify this architecture.

Developing Strategy for a Short-Term Brand

Following I shall elaborate on the model of my working process for the development of strategies designed for brands planned to have Psychological or Social instrumentality. I have already described in brief most of the stages and the concepts and tools used at each stage. Only "Branding Strategy" and "Brand Drama" still need clarifying.

Brand Strategy, also known as the Brand Promise, is the belief about the brand that, if adopted by the consumer, will stimulate the anticipation of benefit that will consequently induce the consumer to desire the brand.

My methodology for developing brand strategies employs my own version of the Means-End model[51] for formulating brand promises. According to this model a link is created in the consumer's belief system between product / service facts and benefits / goals the consumer has, by mediation of perceived consequences or of interpretation of the facts. This association in the consumer's mind construes the product / service as a source of the benefit.

Unlike other approaches to formulating brand promises, an important affirmation of this approach is that all brand beliefs are founded upon facts known to the consumer. This affirmation does not imply that the inferences based on this fact will always withstand scrutiny. In one of the options, the consumer will perceive the fact as symptomatic to a larger situation although it is not necessarily so. Let us take an example. One of GSM's (the cellular communication technology) great strengths is its international roaming capability, giving consumers a seamless service in about 160 countries. This fact can be interpreted as symptomatic of GSM's suitability for people traveling extensively. In turn, this interpretation can offer a psychological benefit by supporting a fantasy of being a 'citizen of the world'.

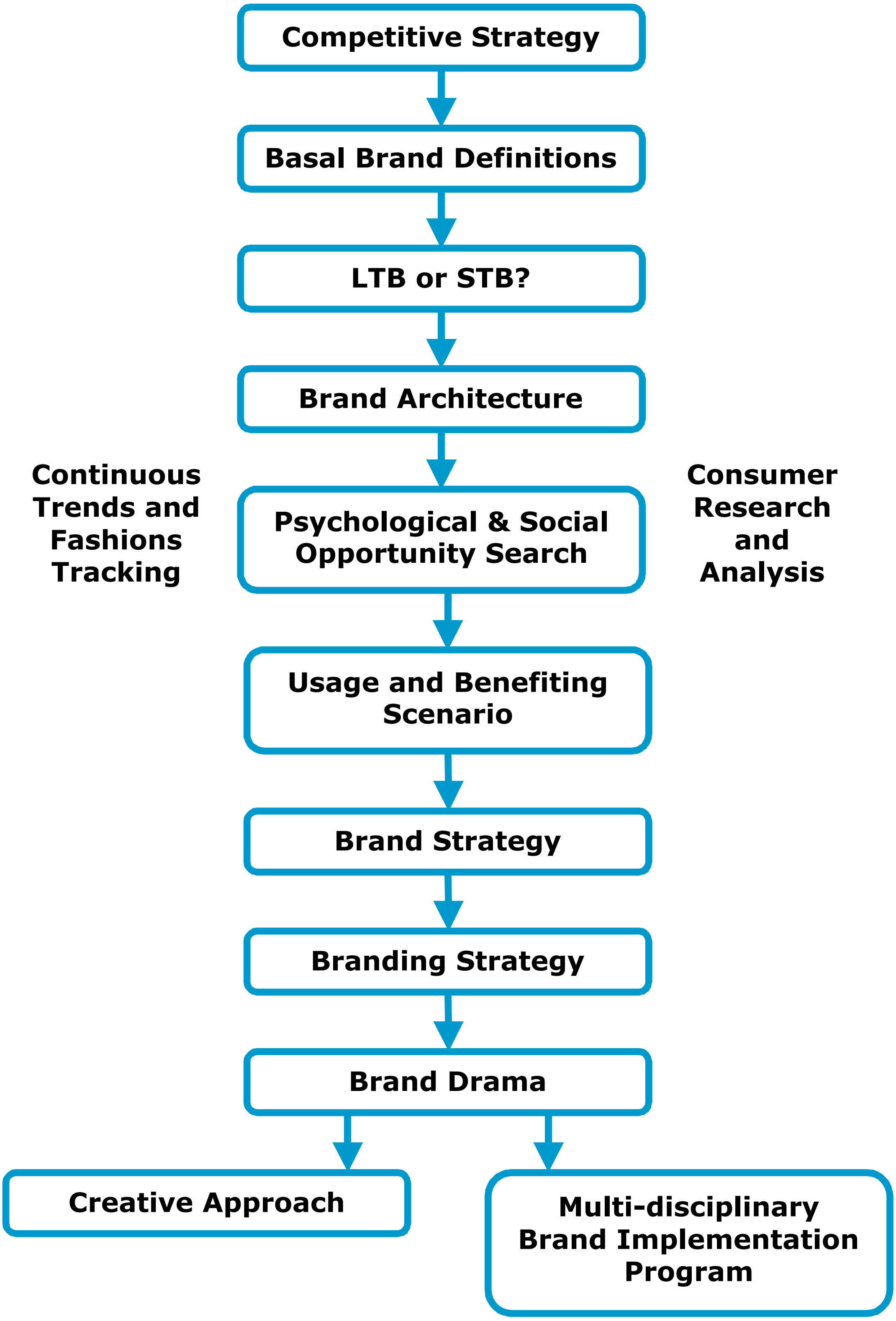
In rare cases an advertising creative approach, if distinctive and used consistently for a long time, can become a fact identified with the brand. Think of Marlboro's cowboy.

In order to devise ways for 'setting in motion' the brand promise in the consumer's mind we need a diagnosis of the consumer's current communicational and Psychological accessibility (levels of interest and openness, doubts, reservations, apprehensions, etc). Then, we need an approach that deals with the diagnosed obstacles in order to reach him or her. This is the Branding Strategy, also known as the Presentation Style, in my methodology.

The Brand Drama approach is a method I use to bring brand strategy to life by aiming to move consumers and to create truly emotional brands. It is an orderly application of the principles of drama theory (usually applied in creation of theater plays, movies and fiction novels) to the implementation of brands. The first step of the method is the translation of the brand's strategy into dramatic terms. The following steps include the creation of a multitude of plots and 'staging' options for a multi-disciplinary actualization of the brand (among them the various means of marketing communication, brand experience, brand culture, brand community, innovations under the brand's concept and so forth).

The brand drama approach is especially fruitful when the brand has Psychological or Social instrumentality. In these cases, we invite consumers to experience a Trance Logic. Examples of trance logic are the internal consistency of fiction, dreams, hypnotic states, religion, and cult-like shared convictions. As long as we immerse ourselves in the trance logic, we are willing to accept and experience a reality that is detached from the input of our senses suspending critical faculties and common sense.

However, every incompatibility disrupting the internal consistency can break the spell and waken us to reality in acute disappointment and frustration. The ultimate contribution of the brand drama approach to branding lies in the ability to create and maintain the trance logic.


Competitive Strategy
Basal Brand Definitions
LTB or STB?
Brand Architecture
Continuous Trends and Fashions Tracking
Psychological & Social Opportunity Search
Consumer Research and Analysis
Usage and Benefiting Scenario
Brand Strategy
Branding Strategy
Brand Drama
Creative Approach
Multi-disciplinary Brand Implementation Program

Principles of Marketing Mix and Marketing Plan

There is a wide diverseness of possible STB. The following principles assume that you are branding a new product.

Several principals distinguish the introduction of STB products from that of LTB products:

1. An STB product must be easier 'to digest' for the consumer than an LTB product.

2. An STB product will be unmistakably contemporary.

3. All marketing efforts will be concentrated on introduction aimed at creating a 'blockbuster' exploding effect.

Here are some more specific guidelines:

- Usually, an STB product will not be a niche product (economic considerations will not allow it).

- The product will not be revolutionary. It will usually be based on a formula that has succeeded in the category before, with the addition of no more than one new element.

- The product will be simple to understand and use, and will be offered in a limited number of versions.

- Usually the product will contain something current and fashionable (design, color, an associative name…).

- The packaging will be remarkable and stand out on the shelf (not 'classic').

- The price will not be high compared to the category, and often special penetration price and payment terms will be offered to ease the purchase.

- Combination of advertising, public relations, and rumors will create an expectation before market penetration.

- There will be early marketing to opinion leaders.

- Special terms will be offered to large and organized groups of consumers.

- Most of the marketing effort will be made during penetration. The advertising will be condensed and poignant within a short period of time (reminders will be used for multi-seasonal products). The chosen advertising channels will enable high frequency of exposure. The theme will emphasize novelty; it will be especially dramatic and will utilize popular elements (a celebrity, a hit song…).

- To create swift and wide-scoped trial, sales promotion will be conducted (launching events, co-operation with complementary products, samples/tasting/test drives, sale together with a familiar product).

- A variety of distribution channels, some unusual, will be used in order to ensure maximum accessibility.

A Final Remark

When managing Short-Term Brands, we should take note that the final judge of the brand's fate is the consumer. The same way a brand planned for the long-term may prove to be a short-term one, the opposite is also possible. One typical danger in managing Short-Term Brands is the tendency to 'kill them' before they exhaust their inherent potential. A careful tracking and monitoring of consumer's anticipations and behavior is essential to the correct navigation in the strong and unpredictable currents of the marketing reality in which we operate.

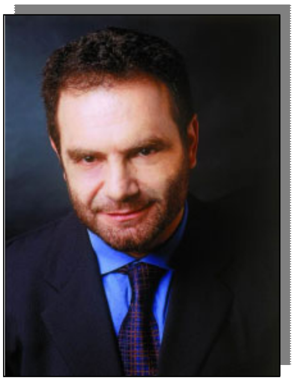
* * *

The book '**Think Short! Short-Term Brands Revolutionize Branding**', by Dan Herman, Ph.D., will be available in early summer, 2003. To be notified please send a request by e-mail to main@danherman.com.

Please feel free to share this e-booklet in its entirety with friends and colleagues and / or to quote its content with accuracy and proper reference to the source

About The Author

Dan Herman, PhD, is the owner and CEO of Herman – Strategic Consultants, a consulting firm based in Tel-Aviv, Israel, and serving clients both locally and internationally. The company specializes in:



- Developing brand strategies that create the Psychological and/or a Social instrumentality of brands to their buyers/users.
- Implementing the Short-Term Brands (STB) approach alongside Long-Term Brands (LTB), in the context of competitive strategy.
- Utilizing the Brand Drama approach for creating the Brand's Trance Logic.
- Integrating projects of branding, re-branding and shaping or re-structuring brand architecture.

In conjunction with his consulting practice, Dr. Herman is a seminar leader, workshop moderator and conference speaker, on the various aspects of managing brand desirability for competitive advantage. Dr. Herman lectures at the Bar-Ilan University in the Master of Communications program, as well as in several MBA programs.

Dr. Dan Herman is the author of the best selling 'Crafting Brand Strategy: The First Step-by-Step Guide to Unique and Irresistible Brands' (Tel-Aviv: Cherikover Publishers, 2001, due in English by the end of 2002) and of numerous journal articles. He co-authored 'Marketing Plus' edited by Yaron London and Amnon Levav, (Tel-Aviv: Achad Publications, 1995).

Positions held in the past include:

- Senior VP at Dahaf Group - Marketing Communications (then, part of the Bozell Worldwide network)
- CEO of Cyrano – Competitive Strategy Consultants
- Executive Marketing Director of Migdal, Israel's leading group of insurance and financial services
- Executive Director of Strategy and Research at Baumann-Ber Advertising (Saatchi & Saatchi)

Among the many organizations and brands, he has worked with are Apple computers, Coca-Cola, Unilever, Motorola, Holiday Inn, Suzuki, Chrysler, Warner Brothers. The list also includes many of Israel's leading companies in the fields of banking and financial services, telecommunications, health services, food and beverages, toiletries and cosmetics, public transportation, hotels, retail chains, the national lottery and several non-profit organizations, government agencies and political parties.

Intrigued by

- **Short-Term Brands (STB)?**
- **Dr. Herman's Methodology for Crafting Brand Strategies?**
- **The Brand Drama Approach?**
- **The Method for Creating Psychological and Social Instrumentality of Brands?**
- **The Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) Phenomenon?**

Dr. Dan Herman is seeking cooperation with business partners worldwide in offering consulting services as well as in research collaborations.

If you are interested or just wish to be continuously updated in Dr. Herman's work – please contact us.

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