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## EDITORIAL

### **The Brand is the Image of the Company**

All winners created a brand as competitive advantage. In an increasingly intense global business arena, branding can serve the creation of competitive advantage through two distinct functions:

- (1) A brand ensures an entrenched customer base that is more difficult (and expensive) to displace;
- (2) A brand can provide a company with a foot in the door when seeking to enter new geographic areas.

The brand can be a useful offensive tool and defensive tool when you are competing with non-local companies. Firms compete on the basis of brands or labels. Each brand may be preferred by different buyers willing to pay a higher price or make more frequent purchases of one branded product over another.

Branding as a concept has been around for many years now. From a customer's point of view, brands simplify shopping, aid in the processing of information about products, and make them feel confident of their purchase decision. Managers have also become aware of the fact that the brand has become an important company asset, and focus is need-ed on the creations of brand equity (R. Abratt, G. Bick, 2005).

The organization branding encompasses the processes by which an organization, as a whole, is branded and its name then used to support its product brands. The organization brand can endorse product brands, providing indication of trust, reputation, and recognition, and marketing powerful associations with in-novation, public services, and national characteristics. The organizations develop brands is a way to create and attract new customers by promoting value, image, loyalty, prestige and lifestyle. They may enjoy a trust or customer loyalty if they able to differentiate the brand from the competitor. Some of the brands have through a change in the organization, but is able to maintain the customer due to strong branding.

Corporate brands act as effective platform for brand stretching and brand extensions and provide a sense of „body” for that brands that operate in diverse, and seemingly unassociated, categories. In addition, corporate branding is important for creating and consolidation of organization's reputation, image, and public acceptance.



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In other words, brands are a mode of influence. Companies create and nurture their brand as a way of affecting the behavior of customers. It doesn't really matter how much people know about their brand if they don't buy it. Communication is only a tool for influencing people's behavior, and it is often the least effective. If one asks himself: How often does someone tells one something that fundamentally influences one's behavior? The answer is rarely, if ever.

Building the successful brand is the most important issue of marketing management and strategy. When a company creates strong brand it attracts customer preference and company is more protected against a competition effort. Strong brands obtain good prices and large market shares through its strong brand management initiatives, and company can plan a growth through the penetration of new markets. In business, having a strong brand can ensure a company's long-term success; companies with portfolios of strong brands create value for the company competitiveness in the market.

Marketing is not a battle of products; it's a battle of perceptions. The power of a brand lies in what resides in the minds of customers – what they learned, felt, seen, and heard about the brand as a result of their experiences over time.

Florin Dănalache  
Senior Editor

## ABSTRACTS

### **Collaborative Decision-Making in Products Design**

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*ABSTRACT: In this paper we present a research in progress that exposes an integral collaborative decision-making process combining Case-Based Reasoning approach and the Process Mining techniques (CBR-Mining) to improve designing of manufacturing products. In collaborative decision-making participating actors have different objectives, constraints, knowledge, and viewpoints. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate via a use case study how process mining techniques may be integrated into Case-base-reasoning.*

**Keywords:** product development process, knowledge management, decision support, case based reasoning, process mining, industrial design.

## Nation Brand and Reputation of a Nation

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*ABSTRACT: Branding is not a new phenomenon. However, in recent decades its use has taken on new forms. Given this, countries/places can also be branded as goods and services. Branding principles apply equally even if we talk about a nation or a corporation. However, the methods differ. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the differences between nation brand and nation image and to analyze the process of creating a national brand for Romania. The secondary research aims to identify the weaknesses of the branding strategy designed for Romania and also the advantages which Romania currently holds in order to better attract the attention of foreign investors. The research findings can be of real interest to marketing experts seeking ways to reposition Romania.*

Keywords: nation brand, nation image, branding strategy, advertising campaign

## Measures of Competitive Advantage

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*ABSTRACT: Based on the understanding that competitive advantage is related to the value creation, we aim to propose reasonable indicators that could be used for measuring the advantage. Considering different measures that are already proposed by other researchers, we aim to find indicators which are both easy-to-use and reliable and which take into consideration not only the value for owners but the value for customers as well. Such measures are needed by practitioners to indicate if the organizations they manage have an advantage and what is the size of this advantage. They are of critical importance for researchers too, in their aim to reveal the relations between advantage and its sources. The paper presents a critical and comparative review of indicators previously proposed and gives arguments for using a practical set of measures for understanding the competitive advantage and its sustainability.*

**Keywords:** competitive advantage, value for customers, value for owners, measures of competitive advantage

## Resources and Sustainable Development

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*ABSTRACT: Since the end of the Second World War, the evolution of agricultural production systems has been characterized by the adoption of agro-industrial development models. On one hand, this has enabled the achievement of important results in terms of agricultural productivity and access to food; on the other, it has led to productive systems that highlighted serious global problems such as malnutrition, food wastes and food losses, oligopolies in key sectors (for example, productive factors), environmental sustainability problems. The aim of this paper is to underline that in order to satisfy the new food requirements resulting from the expected demographic evolution, we don't need to access new resources, but to responsibly use the existing ones. As a consequence, a deep reconsideration of the current patterns of agricultural consumption and consume needs to be developed and implemented.*

Keywords: food consumption patterns, sustainability, livestock farming

## Organizational Process for Branding

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*ABSTRACT: One of the important processes of an organization which is tightly connected and inter-dependent with other organizational processes is the process of branding. There are few researchers addressing the branding process. Starting from the analysis of a company's brand and using the modeling process, the authors propose an effective model to improve the brand through strategic management. In the nowadays fierce competition, owning a place into the world elite companies can be done by redefining the company's brand and through a process of brand's continuous improvement. The authors propose in this paper a model of continuous improvement of the branding process in an industrial organization. Based on the interaction with other organizational processes, the model shows the steps in developing such a process improvement and shows how to solve punctual situations encountered. In organizations that use the process approach, branding has become a process integrator whose influence on other processes can be a determinant of the success or failure of the organization. The proposed model of the branding process allows a more accurate understanding of the activities underlying this process and of its implications, both inside the company and on the market in which it operates.*

Keywords: process approach, branding process, modeling process

## Modern Logistics Methods

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**ABSTRACT:** *In today's business environment, sustainability is a trend which can allow companies to implicate social, economic and environmental pillars to the strategy and management of the company. In order to measure the performance of logistics, we need to take into consideration and determine the interrelationships between all the strategy pillars. A Multiproduct pipeline system ensures efficient and effective transport of large volumes of oil or raw materials from refineries to central warehouses and barges. In the pipe network industry, there are diverse optimization tasks during any period from design to operation. This paper analyzes the classic and modern models used by the oil industry, starting from the MILP linear programming (with one or more variables modeled), Petri networks, Monte Carlo simulations, neural models, Balanced Scorecard, Triangular Fuzzy Numbers in combination with Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT), FUZZY PERT algorithm and Analytic Network Process (ANP). The purpose of this analysis is to identify the optimal and effective models for planning and programming decisions in the supply chain, so that the final customer demand be satisfied at the highest level, in real time and at a lower cost. Moreover, the studied performance indicators/methods are fundamental managerial tools for decision-making in any type of organization.*

**Keywords:** Petroleum distribution, Mixed-in-teger linear program (MILP), Multimode transportation, Multiproduct pipeline, Multi-pipeline system

## Achieving and Improving Job Performance

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*ABSTRACT: The article analyzes the idea that work performance is a very important concept, both for employees and for the employers. Job performance is related to the management field, to motivation, human resources management, and business success or failure. Work performance influences and is also influenced by work satisfaction and by many other factors. If managers are aware of this factors, they can avoid dissatisfaction, lack of cooperation and negativism of their employees. Managers must evaluate their employees to know what their complaints and their needs are and to improve the working process in order to find out the factors that affect job performance. The business environment influences the job performance. A pleasant working environment with understanding and cooperation, where responsibilities, duties and tasks are clearly stated, where ideas, work experiences and knowledge are shared, will lead to a good job performance.*

Keywords: job performance, work satisfaction, motivation, work productivity, human resources management